



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

Final Report for Phase I: Listening and Dialogue

A Report to the Diocese of Broken Bay

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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

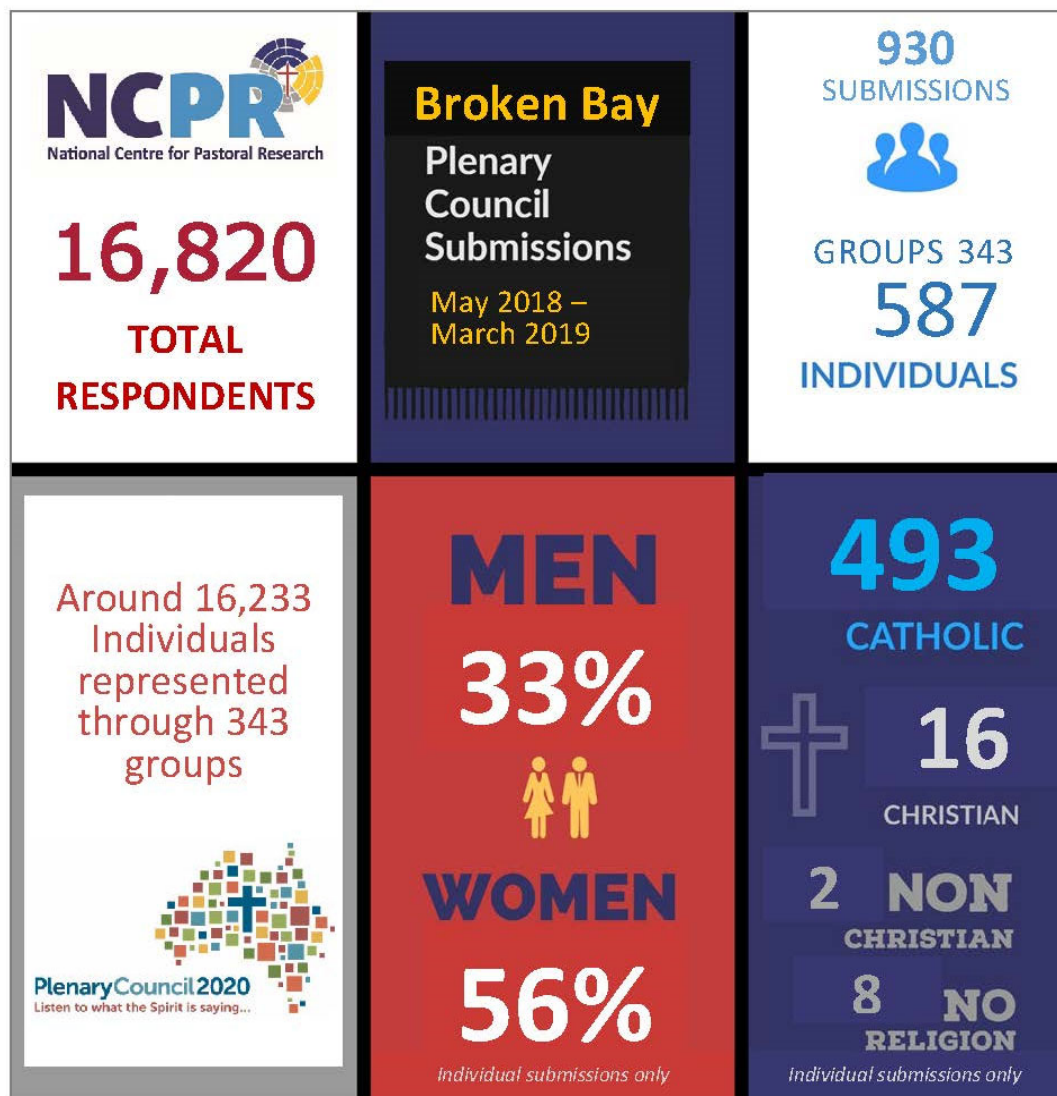
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Diocesan Submissions Summary Snapshot: May 2018—March 2019



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 – Broken Bay

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 Broken Bay, we received a total of 930 completed responses from May 2018 until 13 March 2019. Of these, 562 respondents had participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter, while another 88 were unsure if they had. About 278 respondents indicated that they had not participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter.

Of the 930 submissions, 343 submissions were from groups or organisations and 587 submissions were from individuals. There were 16,233 people represented through the 343 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 16,820.

Table 1: Number of Submissions	
Total number of submissions received	930
<i>Participated in Listening & Dialogue Encounter?</i>	
Yes	562
No	278
Not sure	88
Not stated	2
Total	930
Submissions received from groups or organisations	343
Submissions received from individuals	587
Total	930

INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March 2019, a total of 587 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 Broken Bay. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the same table. About 51 per cent (302) were received from those aged 50 and over. The most number of submissions within this age range were received from the 50-54 years and 70-74 years age groups (58 responses each).

At the close of submissions, there were 70 individual submissions received from those aged under 25.

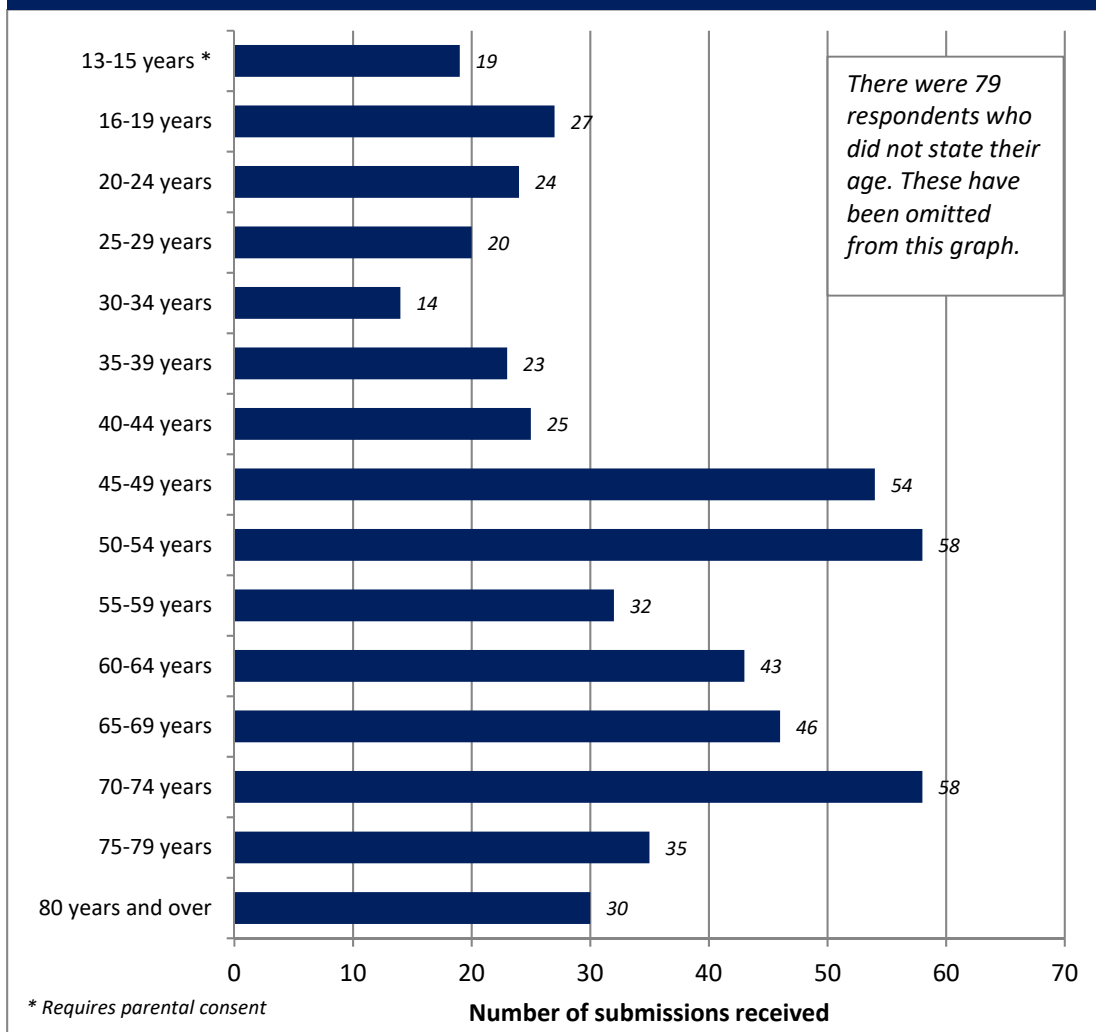
Participants aged 16-17 were encouraged to discuss the questionnaire with their parent or guardian. Many of these responses came from schools that sent in their responses through the online survey. As Table 2 shows, there were 27 individual submissions made from the 16-19 years age group in your diocese.

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 19 individual submissions made from this age group in your diocese.

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

13-15 years *	19
16-19 years	27
20-24 years	24
25-29 years	20
30-34 years	14
35-39 years	23
40-44 years	25
45-49 years	54
50-54 years	58
55-59 years	32
60-64 years	43
65-69 years	46
70-74 years	58
75-79 years	35
80 years and over	30
Not stated	79
Total	587

* 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 (56%), while a further 33 per cent were male. Table 3 shows that there were 194 men and 326 women who made submissions. Twelve respondents preferred not to state their sex, while 55 respondents did not answer this question.

Table 3: Sex (individual responses only)

Female	326
Male	194
Prefer not to say	12
Not stated	55
Total	587

Countries of Birth

Table 4a shows the country of birth of individual respondents from your diocese. As expected, a large number of respondents (60%) were born in Australia. Twenty-five per cent came from other countries, while around 15 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	352	60.0
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	21	3.6
Philippines	16	2.7
New Zealand	12	2.0
Malaysia	9	1.5
United States of America	8	1.4
Hong Kong (S.A.R.)	7	1.2
Italy	7	1.2
Spain	6	1.0
Other Countries	60	10.2
Not stated	89	15.2
Total	587	100.0

Table 4b: Country of birth - Summary (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	352	60.0
Other English-speaking country	52	8.9
Non-English-speaking country	94	16.0
Not stated	89	15.2
Total	587	100.0

Table 4c: Mother's country of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	281	47.9
Other English speaking country	77	13.1
Non-English speaking country	128	21.8
Not stated	101	17.2
Total	587	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.

Table 4d: Father's country of birth (individual responses only)		
	N	%
Australia	272	46.3
Other English-speaking country	65	11.1
Non-English-speaking country	143	24.4
Not stated	107	18.2
Total	587	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 less than one per cent of all individual respondents.

Table 5: Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (individual responses only)	
Yes	1
No	499
Not stated	87
Total	587

Religion of Respondents

The religion question was answered by individual respondents only. Of the total 587 individual submissions that were received from your diocese, 493 respondents (84%) were Catholic. Sixteen respondents were from other Christian denominations while there were two from non-Christian religions. A further 68 respondents did not state their religion and eight respondents chose the 'no religion' response.

Table 6: Religion (individual responses only)		Person	Percent
Catholic		493	84.0
Other Christian:			
Anglican		6	1.0
Churches of Christ		1	0.2
Orthodox		1	0.2
Presbyterian and Reformed		2	0.3
Uniting Church		3	0.5
Other Christian		3	0.5
Non Christian:			
Hinduism		1	0.2
Other religion		1	0.2
No religion		8	1.4
Not stated		68	11.6
Total		587	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 392 respondents indicated that they went to Mass regularly and were involved in other church activities. There were 56 respondents who said they went to Mass and church activities sometimes, while 16 respondents considered themselves Catholic but were not involved or described their participation in other terms. A further 29 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	241	146	5	392
I am Catholic and go to Mass and church activities sometimes	36	18	2	56
I am Catholic, but I don't practise or get involved in anything	11	0	0	11
I consider myself Catholic but I am not sure what to think about the Catholic faith	3	2	0	5
Other	10	10	0	20
Not stated	3	4	2	9
Total	304	180	9	493

GROUP SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March, there were a total of 343 group submissions made from your diocese. Around 16,233 individuals were represented through these groups. However, 19 groups did not report their number of participating members, indicating that the total number of people represented through the group submissions may be considerably higher.

While 239 group submissions provided a group name, 104 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 any 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 Pared Foundation with 1,920 members. There were also a number of other parish and school groups such as the St Agatha's Catholic Parish with 1,000 participants and Mercy Catholic College with 708 members. There were 13 other groups with 100 members or more.

Table 8 : Group submissions from the diocese	
Name of group	Group size
Pared Foundation	1,920
St Agatha's Catholic Parish	1,000
Hornsby Cathedral Parish	759
Divine Will	750
Mercy Catholic College	708
Mercy Catholic College	650
St Paul's Catholic College Manly	530
National Association of Catholic Families	500
Eremeran Hills	400
Mater Maria Catholic College Warriewood	340
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School`	200
Lindfield-Killara Catholic Parish	200
Yr 11 stds Mater Maria Catholic College Warriewood	140
Diocese of Broken Bay	100
Manly Freshwater Parish	100
Lindfield Killara Catholic Parish	100
St Edwards	85
Parish Animators Broken Bay Diocese	84
St Augustine's College, Brookvale NSW	82
Clergy & Principals gathering Broken Bay	80

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 under 20 years age group was the largest group represented with 3,714 members. This was followed by the group aged 50-69 years with 1,998 members. There was no age provided for around 41 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	3,714
20 - 29 years	667
30 - 49 years	1,514
50 - 69 years	1,998
70 and over	721
Unknown	41
Total	8,655

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

Of the total 10,676 group members whose sex was reported, 59 per cent (6,295) were female and 41 per cent (4,381) 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	6,295
Male	4,381
Total	10,676

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:

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

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

- Love God, Love Neighbour (Chapter 4)
 - *Greater focus on Jesus Christ (p. 30)*
 - *Greater trust, faith and hope in God (p. 29)*
 - *Better faith formation (p. 38)*
 - *Greater focus on the Word of God (p. 31)*
 - *Remaining faithful to Church teaching (p. 32)*
 - *Care for neighbour (p. 36)*
 - *Renewed call to holiness (p. 35)*
 - *Keeping the faith (p. 33)*
- 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)*
 - *Ending discrimination of LGBTI (p. 110)*
- Sacraments (Chapter 6)
 - *Holy Orders – Ending celibacy / allowing priests to marry (p. 66)*
 - *Greater emphasis on prayer and sacraments (p. 64)*
 - *Holy Orders - Ordination of women (p. 69)*
- Leadership and Church Governance (Chapter 7)
 - *Greater role for women (p. 83)*
 - *New model of Church, diocese, parish (p. 93)*
 - *Greater leadership from bishops (p. 87)*

- *Greater leadership from priests (p. 88)*
- *Ending clericalism (p. 80)*
- *Greater involvement of the laity (p. 84)*
- *New leadership and governance model (p. 91)*

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

- *Outreach to youth (p. 124)*
- *Sharing the faith with others (p. 128)*
- *Teaching authentic Catholic faith (p. 151)*
- *More transparency and accountability regarding clergy sexual abuse (p. 102)*
- *Better homilies (p. 54)*
- *More welcoming parishes (p. 161)*

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 40 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.

To slow down and be still and silent in our search for our answers to the question. Let the answers come through the conversations we are having and will have with ourselves and each other if we take the time to stop/ listen /share each other's lives.

Renewal of Catholic schools and Catholic education to authentic faith. Not only do we lose most kids at the age of 10—and there's a lot that could be said about why—there's simply no support structure for Catholic students in 'Catholic' schools. They find themselves isolated in the practice of their faith; and this isn't helped by being isolated in their age group in their parish, though that's a separate issue. My experience talking with these teenagers and my personal experience is that they are often relentlessly harassed and persecuted for their faith. This is not just at the hands of other students but also of their teachers. When they seek to rectify this with their principal or other superior, nothing gets done. It seems, too, that the bishops are powerless to do anything about it. I can think of a handful of students who began practicing their faith in high school only for it to be suffocated and killed off by their 'Catholic' school. This is exacerbated in schools with religious jurisdiction instead of Diocesan, such as the EREA. They have no accountability to the bishops. The education boards for these schools are run by lay people as the religious are no longer present, and with no clear requirement or expectation of religious observance it is essentially run like a secular school. Viz., the EREA publishing a defence of same sex marriage that read as if it were attempting to refute the teachings of the Church, ending on the line "love is love." Put simply, if the Church has any interest in retaining (or gaining) young people, we have to sort out their most frequent encounter of it —their schools. Their experience with the faith is more defined by their daily encounter with it in their school than their occasional Sunday at Church. The structure of schools must exist that they are authentically Catholic and can be swept under the rug by the bishops if they are found lacking. In Bishop [-]'s recent Confirmation homily, he spoke of how non-Catholics today are not simply passive towards the Church; they are actively hostile. How, then, can the Church justify employing non-Catholics into the most fundamental belief-forming role there is in all of society, teaching? The actual quality of

Catholic religious teaching is shocking. I keep in touch with about 10 people from high school, and, through God's grace, I've managed to introduce some of them to the faith. One person I've been talking to recently is a devout Anglican/evangelical. We got into an hour long discussion about some of the theological problems he has with the Church. I was shocked at how poor his understanding of our beliefs are, regularly repeating mute lines about how we worship Mary. This man has been in a Catholic school for 13 years—where is his understanding of our faith at all? A friend who studies education in a Catholic university told me that her lecturer denies the Crucifixion and Resurrection—this is what is taught to our teachers, who pass it on!

I think that God wants his Church to be more dynamic. To stop "Pussy Footing" around and to work towards making Australia a much better place by using what the Church has already got at its disposal. The Catholic Church in Australia has too many churches, too many primary schools, too much underutilized land and a very archaic way of running these facilities. We can centralise so many of these. We can build what I would call "Deanery Centres" with large modern air conditioned churches and larger presbyteries and large primary schools and secondary colleges. These schools will have indoor sports facilities and soundproof music rooms that can be accessed out of school hours because the buildings have been designed to accommodate out of hours access. We can build low cost housing on these sites and attract the nurses, police officers, firefighters etc. At a later stage, we could add Low and High care aged care facilities. We can have crèches and places where mothers can bring their very young children to play under supervision whilst they chat and have coffee. How do we pay for them? We sell the existing churches in just the same way as the Anglican Church in Tasmania is doing. Yes, we will lose some of our older parishioners who will not participate in this new Central Church. It will require extra travel and the younger Mass going Catholics will have to pick up the older members of their congregation and drive them to and from Mass. However if they are like me, they only have a few more years to live and their souls do not need saving. It is the younger Catholics that do not attend the celebration of the Eucharist that God wants. He wants them back and he wants us to make it happen. We have, in our congregations architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, real estate agents, financial managers etc. but we are not attracting them to voluntarily work for the Church because there is nothing that requires their talents at this point in time. We are sitting on our hands and doing comparatively very little to house the homeless; to care for the elderly; to encourage young sportspersons, and young musicians to be better citizens and play a greater role in their community. Because the "Deanery Centre" will have larger congregation, Music masters can be employed to create choirs and music ensembles and the like. We might even have cafés operating. Coaches can be recompensed for bringing on sports teams. Think about how God will feel if we start on this journey. Yes it will take 40 to 50 years but boy will it be worthwhile.

1. Lead the change in ensuring crimes of the past doesn't happen again.
2. Stop the Church hypocrisy (protecting and promoting paedophile priests) and welcome divorced couples who have found new love and LGBT couples in loving and selfless long term relationships.
3. Challenge church-goers in reversing apostasy and inspire others outside of the Church to join the Church.
4. Issue guidelines so anyone can discern true divine personal revelations from fake revelations.
5. Make full use of the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to benefit all religious institutions.

There are three things I think are important to say. Firstly, God wants us to be fulfilled in the things which make us happy, and so when we ask God for good things, then we have done what God expected of us, as it is God who inspires us to good things and to wanting. Second, in the mind of God there is no need or requirement, no beginning or end, God is the final resting place, and the weary can go to him, so should the Church be. A great place of rest and refuge with not even the slightest sense of there being some work or mission to perform to purchase God's grace, just purity in the here and now and repose, even recreation. Thirdly, for those who ask for work, the kingdom should be built, a great new temple for recording the history of the mysteries and as the seat of the throne of the one who is coming.

Female ordination, female leadership roles at all levels of Church.
<p>(1) Pray that implementation by the entire Church membership of the pastoral council's final recommendations may produce real renewal within the tired and battered Church in Australia.</p> <p>(2) Review existing structures and practices to ensure they remain relevant to the Mission of the Church now and in the years to come; abolish or modify where necessary.</p>
<p>We are living in an age of shallowness, superficiality, narcissism and materialism. There has been much research to show that our youth are experiencing much higher levels of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders. I can speak personally to attest to that. And there is strong evidence to suggest that social media and our addiction to our smart phones have a very big role to play. Not only that, we live in a time where the complacency of the previous generations has led the world to an enormous problem that needs to be addressed: climate change. In 1959, a brilliant nuclear physicist called Edward Teller gave a seminar to all the oil executives in the U.S. about the dangers of our dependence on fossil fuels. Almost sixty years later, almost nothing has been done. There is no binding agreement to reduce carbon emissions and we're on track to such catastrophic warming that we risk the presence of life on Earth. In Sydney, bush fires rage in winter. The earliest fire ban on record has been enforced. The ocean is full of plastic killing marine life. Half the Great Barrier Reef is dead. In Florida in America, the sea is already flooding some parts. (And the rainbow is supposed to signify God's promise that He would not flood us again.) So what is God telling us? I think He is telling us that the Final Judgement is coming. And that if we do not reject consumerism; if we do not reject decadence; if we do not change our luxurious lifestyles and our wasteful society—then He will reject it for us by banishing us from the Earth.</p>
<p>God is asking us one question—What would Jesus do? Church leaders have good intentions but do they ask this question? The Church runs on expediency instead of what is good for the people. Priests should be, walking the streets of their community, getting to know everyone, chatting, making house calls, instead what I am hearing all the time is how they are caught up in so much administration—WHY! This work is a Layperson job, not what a Man of God should be caught up in. Teaching children and congregation that a relationship with Jesus is the way, teach more spirituality, which is lacking in our priests and is not taught in schools. Church needs to recognise the other half of the human race and have more women in roles. This will lead to transparency and a just way of leading the Catholic Church into what Jesus wanted. A personal relationship with Jesus and our priests on a spiritual level is what Australia needs.</p>
<p>I have followed the project of this important event and I have prayed for it. I have also invited the Members of St Vincent de Paul Society of [-], [-] Conference to pray for it. The subjects I kept thinking of are the following four: 1/ Evangelization in the 3rd Millennium, 2/ Priestly Celibacy, 3/ The sacrament of Marriage, 4/ The Social Justice. EVANGELIZATION IN THE 3rd MILLENNIUM. 1/ How to make the Gospel relevant in our days? Preaching a Mission? 2/ How to make our prayers alive and fruitful? Not to be afraid to show our faith in public. Encourage prayer at home. 3/ How important is to be witnesses of Christ Message? We are all missionaries and we must lead by example. THE PRIEST CELIBACY. 1/ Do we need to make it OPTIONAL? It could be one point to consider. 2/ Do we need to suppress it? It could be too drastic a decision. 3/ Do we need to better support our priests? In which way? Some priests can be too isolated and lonely. Should we consider the adoption of an isolated priest by a mature family? 4/ How to tackle priestly misbehaviour? All priests must help each other to progress in spirituality. Jesus and St Paul have also suggested the brotherly counselling. (Mt 18, 15-17) (Gal 6, 1-2) Priests must see their bishop as a concerned Father not an authoritarian boss and should discuss with him any personal problems. The bishop must act in an effective way to avoid aggravation of a crisis and scandal. The priest in crisis must be offered help and directed to go into a convent if necessary. In some cases, he should be directed to apply for dispensation. In the most serious cases and in the case of a non-cooperative case the priest must be demoted and laicised. Do not cover and hide misbehaviour. (Ephesian 5:10-11) 5/ How to protect the secrecy of Confession? Confession is and must remain secret. A problematic penitent: a rapist, a murderer, or a child abuser should NEVER</p>

been given the absolution, BUT FIRMLY DIRECTED to report themselves to the police. THE SACRALITY OF MARRIAGE PROTECTION. 1/ How to promote the SACRAMENT of Marriage? All the faithful at Mass must be made aware that for us Catholic Marriage is a sacrament. 2/ How to prepare the candidates to Marriage? The Catholic Candidates to the sacrament MUST know the Christian requirements to receive this sacrament. They have to participate to a comprehensive and lengthy preparation to the sacrament. They need to understand that if problems arise during their married life, they must seek help within the Congregation and the Catholic Care agencies. They should be discouraged to recur to Lay agencies and even to the Family Court before having exhausted any venues within the Congregation. 3/ How to tackle failure of Marriage? If the marriage is irretrievably destroyed, the separated spouses MUST be discouraged to enter into a conflict. This can be (continue in the next window.)

That we as Catholics should make it easy and simple for anyone who would like to join and be a Catholic to do so. I know of one individual who several years ago tried become Catholic, through no fault of his/or her own this person was born overseas from Protestant parents. This person was baptised and I know was a good Christian. Upon trying to be accepted as a Catholic it was suggested that it was such a long convoluted process that it discouraged a good person from persevering at the time. To my mind we should make people welcome if they are clearly of goodwill.

Clergy Formation made easier to get involved, in my case I started back in 2013 the course in becoming a Deacon, but I found there were many "Road Blocks" in my way. In my heart, I know that there was a Spiritual calling but I feel there was too much on the Academics, not on the Pastoral needs of the candidates. I am a Acolyte of 26yrs and I feel that I should been given the chance of following the training, now as my wife has passed away in 2015, I still have the same calling, also feel that there are many other men in the wishing to be given a GO.

To love one another. To accept one another as we are, or as we were born, and more importantly as we have become. My thoughts and love goes out to the so called "gay people" in our midst. God has made each and every one of them and it appears they do not feel welcome in our Church.

God is asking us to find a way to encourage our Catholic youth to return to the faith. Our parish Sunday morning Mass has no teenage youth in attendance. The average age of parishioners is over 70. I believe that our Church will not be functioning in the next 20 years unless we make the Mass more teenage friendly.

To renew the Church through a growth in our relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to be realised through a much higher focus on the teachings of Jesus rather than the rules made by the Church organisation on his behalf.

To teach the Bible and Bible only. As the end times are fast approaching it is time that we need to fortify our faith in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. This is only possible by preaching the gospels and its messages to all the communities in Australia.

God wants all Christians to be one so the Catholic Church should move away from the idea that we are the one and only true Church. God wants to see one Church, one Body of Christ. The big question is how can we ever find full communion? Protestant churches don't have any problem sharing their "bread (biscuits) and wine (cordial) with us for these are just symbols for them and for us. So they sound inclusive while we are exclusive because we ask non-Catholics to cross their arms if they want to approach the priest/communion minister to indicate that they are there only to get a blessing. And yet our churches are packed during Christmas while our Sunday Masses have a lot of empty pews. Every single Catholic receives Holy Communion while our Sunday Masses. Are these one-day-a-year Catholics any better than those devout Protestants who know their Bible well and attend Sunday services regularly? Is it possible to argue that if someone receives Holy Communion with genuine faith then Jesus is truly present in the form of bread and wine? If a person sees these as symbols only, then that is all it is for them. Who knows what grace

they may receive anyway and may want to look into the matter more seriously? I'm too much of a traditional cradle Catholic to advocate this but submit it for your consideration.
1. To really listen to the hurts of those betrayed by the Church and its organisations through abuse and cover up. 2. To help to support and heal those hurt by members of the Church. 3. To really acknowledge and admit that there has been a culture of cover up of CRIMINAL actions and activity not use euphemisms in documents and press releases as I have read when distributed by the Council of bishops. 4. To meet and celebrate with the faith community through authentic and relevant liturgies that will enhance and strengthen individual relationships with God and those we have with others in our lives. 5. To find ways to make the ordination of ministers appealing to young people as a service, gift and privilege that they are called to live. 6. Consider how and what a married priest could bring to a faith community by the living of their life experience in conjunction with their role of ordination. 7. ...
Patience, change, acceptance, responsibility, tolerance, faith. God is asking us to listen, observe, see the other perspective, not judge and be tolerant of differences and differing opinions. Believe that the Church can accept all and demonstrate the love of God and what our pope models when he says 'Who am I to judge'. God is asking those of faith to question how they too can make a difference to the Church. God is asking how can the Church, clergy, admin staff, all who are involved make themselves open to engage parishioners, create and develop a Church of love, acceptance, warmth and faith. Clergy—listen to the community or that community will disengage further.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To take a stand in the world, speaking as a Church on issues affecting our community, e.g. refugees, immigration, the budget -To be more accepting of people outside the Church, showing true respect not just token acceptance. -To let people who want to receive the sacraments do so even if they are gay or married outside the Church, etc.
That we be far less materialistic.
To take Christ to the world, to be Christ to one another. To heal, to listen, to teach, to lead. To feed the hungry, to give the Eucharist to the world through actions of charity, to teach and explain the Gospel and to give witness by our lives. To share our wealth with the poor, to open our doors to refugees, to acknowledge our wrongdoing openly, repent of dishonesty and deceit and to make just reparation to those we have wronged. To implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission and seek healing for those who were abused, especially those who were in our care. To overhaul Catholic schools and institutions and ensure that their first priority is missionary and not profit-based. To broaden our charitable base so that Catholics are known as the ones to call on in times of need, the ones who will share their last loaf of bread, the ones who will listen to stories of injustice and act to protect the weak.
God is asking us to collaborate, to work together as parishes and communities to support each other, to celebrate creation and show our love for Him in this way.
I think God is asking us to rebuild his Church, just like He asked St Francis of Assisi. Here are some of the more serious problems we face today. We have many good priests who are trying to build up the communities in our parishes, but it is very hard when we don't have the support of the local schools. We have children receiving the sacraments, but they only turn up once to receive their first Holy Communion and we don't see them again on Sundays. We may see them from time to time at a school Mass and they all receive Holy Communion. We doubt very much if they have been to Reconciliation beforehand. It seems they have not been taught anything about mortal sin. In our diocese the sacrament of Confirmation takes place before the children receive their first sacrament of Penance. The CCC 1310 and 1319 both state that the child must be in the state of grace. It also states in CCC 1319 the candidate for Confirmation must be able to profess the faith and has a good deal more responsibilities with Confirmation. We seem to have lost the sacredness of the Mass, and people don't seem to know what is happening within the Mass. We have two

priests in our parish; one genuflects before coming in the sanctuary, the other just gives a very simple bow. The Tabernacle is in the sanctuary behind the Altar. I was taught that we all should genuflect, because of the position of the Tabernacle. We badly need Adult faith formation. We also need to have community social activity.
The question should be, What would Jesus say about the state of the Church. One way is to teach the difference between Faith and Religion. God is demanding that we do away with the administration duties of our priest and free them so they may do the work of Jesus in the community. Lay women and men can be used for administration duties. Our Australian seminaries need to move away from the Irish institution of making the Catholic Church a business and teach the spirituality of God. While I acknowledge that after the Commonwealth, the Church is the biggest contributor to social justice, this would still happen anyway. Our priests are there for the people Catholics and non-Catholics, instead they are afraid to walk the streets. Insurance companies rule their lives, instead of God. They put their own personal safety above speaking to the people. They are men of God; they should be doing God's work.
The validity of the ordination of priests in the Roman Catholic Church. To encourage the reception of the sacraments by all.
A renewal through prayer and penance. A perseverance which relies on the grace of God primarily found in the sacraments. In hard times, God asks us for heroic sanctity. We can't do this on our own, we need humility to go to our Lord and his mother.
I think God is asking us "to be holy as your heavenly Father is holy". He is calling us to sanctity. We are called to pray, pray, pray; to pray the Rosary daily; to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy; to makes acts of penance and to attend daily Mass if possible. Australia needs conversion and holiness. The Church needs holy priests and people to bring it through this crisis and to be a light to our nation.
RECONCILIATION * Quickly * Compassionately * Openly. INCLUDE * Welcoming people of all faiths * Building Interfaith, Community Networks, Cross Ethnic and Cultural Barriers. * Include the school through music, worship, mentoring etc. * Reaching out to those who feel marginalized, overlooked, left behind, lonely etc. * Make Mass meaningful and inclusive of all who believe.
To be open in prayer and thought to the Holy Spirit.
I think he is asking us to care more for each other, to share what we have, to live simply so others can simply live, and to build community so we know the needs of each other better.
Love GOD and LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR in today's modern world, addressing the complex situations. Respecting other religions, culture, and dignity of all humans. Feel and love the presence of GOD in actions of care, compassion, encouragement, listening to others. Communities are built not only in Church but in entertainment, sport, work, schools, universities, our wonderful world is itself a prayer of THANKS to GOD. We really need to address the position of the CATHOLIC CHURCH to the problems of celibate, role of women, discrimination based on sex, religion or race. What are the concerns of young people? Scriptures relevant to age and modern life, evolution, teach respect of the environment, is not only save your soul.
We should be more dedicated to the Eucharist; promote adoration; have more Australian pilgrimages (even walking pilgrimages e.g. crex.org—Ballarat to Bendigo—we should have more of these); have a dedicated Australian Catholic TV/radio channel even if it's online only (such as EWTN); promote single life as a vocation rather than a temporary vocation; promote and offer Catholic distance/online education, especially Catholic home school education (have resources for home schooling e.g. www.setonhome.org in USA) and have Catholic parishes offer spaces for Catholic Home-schooling for parishioners; and have more activities for over 35 year olds (e.g. since WYD is for youth aged between 16 and 35 year olds and a lot of young adult events have a limit of 35 year olds, there doesn't seem to be a lot of activities for people over the age of 35.
I believe this is an opportunity for the Catholic Church to demonstrate that it has turned a new page in its history. There has been so much negativity resulting from the abuse of children Royal Commission and its treatment of victims that many good people have been turned away from

anything to do with the Church. In addition, the Church has to demonstrate that it moved away from many of its old practices and traditions that have turned young adults away and led them to believe that the Church and the message of the gospels are no longer relevant.
Main Focus: Inclusiveness for all. Involvement of laity in the parish. Change is required to move forward and cater for young people. A formal apology for wrong doings is necessary to heal and regain trust from community.
Many Catholics feel some degree of estrangement from their faith, or doubt or disagreements (or even misunderstandings) with some aspects of the Church's teachings. I'm not saying the Church should change any of those teachings, just that it should try harder to build bridges with those who may experience doubts or disagreements with aspects of them. Try to create an environment in which people feel open to share their spiritual struggles and doubts and queries instead of feeling like they have to hide them.
Women need to be able to more 'power' involvement in the Church. More roles for women. More Laity involvement. Female priests. Allow priests to marry. Create equality in the Church—reduce the hierarchy as it is off putting. Liturgy that children, young people and families can relate to and enjoy. Ensure the Church is applicable and relevant for the youth. Prayers should be in language that is understood by all. For more active participation.
We think that God is asking us to be an inclusive Church. This includes minority groups such as women, same sex couples, divorcees, youth, people of different religions receiving all sacraments. We also strongly believe that women should be included in the decision making process within the Church. Women should be allowed equal opportunities in leadership roles. We feel the structure of the Mass is restricting the ability for all participate. We foresee the Church providing opportunities for youth to experience God and the Catholic Church through music and celebrations (like World Youth Day).
God is asking us to follow the Gospels as He wants everyone saved. That means loving your neighbour as yourself: social justice. Loving everyone means including everyone: women, homosexuals and the divorced and not following antiquated Church rules.
I believe God is asking us to control the size of the population of humans on earth to ensure his gift is not destroyed. I believe God wants us to protect the environment for the same reason. I believe God wants his messengers (priests) to be men or women with the full life experience of marriage and family to understand how to relate to people. I believe God is more concerned with the way a person lives their life than the number of times they go to Church. I believe God wants us to go to Church as a welcoming place to focus on prayer rather than an obligation to be ticked off a list of things to do.
Allow priests to marry if they wish (they can take a vow of celibacy if they are called to do so but it should not be compulsory). In doing this, we would have more young, faith filled, capable, Australian men answering the call to the priesthood. Allow lay people including women to have a more active role in ministry. Engage youth and families—the Church cannot be sustained if we don't. Part of this is making the Church relevant to their lives and to the modern world that we live in. The Environment—God is asking us to care for his creation! We cannot keep ignoring the signs and impact of global warming. We need to be more accepting and welcoming of all people. Continue on the path of reconciliation and healing—people are still hurting and the Church is still hurting from the atrocities that occurred at the hands of Clergy.
Renewing the Church so that it remains a force for the good in Australian Society. Finding ways that are profound and not shallow to encourage our young to be committed members of the Catholic Community in Australia. Finding more ways to encourage young people to participate/get involved/join. Revisiting and teaching every single Catholic, young and old, the basic teachings and history of the Catholic Church. Using all the disposable means available, new avenues in old and new media, to advance the Catholic message. Rebuilding trust due to child abuse in the Catholic Church and ensuring there is a safe environment for children in the community and learning environment. Being a more inclusive Church—to reach out to people and be more

<p>accommodating of differences. Becoming a little more modern, for example, caring for partners of mixed marriages as Catholic rules are too rigid. Our children not feeling it necessary to be part of a Catholic Community once they leave the family home. Ensuring the Church has wise and courageous leaders as spokespersons and defenders of the Catholic tradition. Having more lay people or nuns to carry out various duties undertaken by priests. God asking us to get to know him better and to make time for him. Giving/allowing priests the choice to marry if they wish. Finding ways of overcoming the problem of priests that do not speak English well and especially with an accent.</p>
<p>A refocus and re-education in values. With ongoing conflict in the world and increase in violence, I believe if we all have common values it will have a positive impact with our future generations.</p>
<p>a. To rebuild the image of the Church as one with Integrity, Transparency and Highest Moral Standards. b. To communicate effectively and efficiently with parishioners and non-believers using simple, unambiguous language that is relevant to the modern day society. c. To find ways to attract youth participation and focus on Youth formation.</p>
<p>God is asking us Catholics in Australia to go back to Catholic traditions. We have suffered apostasy since the introduction of new order Mass. For example, the Cathedral of [-] is no near looks like a traditional Catholic Church. In fact, it looks like a Protestant Church. Church bells no longer ring. The tabernacle no longer the centre of the Church.</p>
<p>Humility, a pilgrim Church, a field hospital, a listening Church. Less condemnation and more justice and emphasis on the interior life. To get rid of the misogyny and the fear of sex in the Church. To welcome all people and especially refugees and asylum seekers. To allow priests and bishops to marry. To ordain women and have women in all leadership positions in the Church. To listen to the experience of women when it comes to reproduction. To refashion the governance of the Church. If the abuse scandal has made anything clear, it is the fallibility of our bishops. To be transparent on the finances of the Church. To eliminate the clericalism that bedevils our Church.</p>
<p>A Church that is of, and for, the 21st century. Moving forward in the way the Church is seen and 'run'. Like Pope Francis, a Church that has servant leaders that 'smell of their sheep'. An inclusive Church that is welcoming to all. A Church that promotes and supports a greater role and responsibility for to women. Our Church that is responsive and considerate of what is happening in the world. Tradition is important but we should not fall back or be limited by tradition. Being brave to forge ahead and make change. Our Church needs to be relevant in the 21st century. Show leadership allowing married priest and women priests who will better identify with families and actively work to reduce risk of child abuse. Church is seen as wealthy, let's work to change that. Celebrations should be vibrant, energetic and passionate. To be inclusive of the diverse societal groups. To renew our commitment to gospel values as they are often not reflected today. Rediscover the 'essence' of Jesus and to apply His message in our life today. Blow away stale practices. Acknowledge and reconcile, in word and deed, the issues of the past, including child abuse, and develop a plan for the future. Build a Church that is more inclusive and reaches out to others in need. Respond to life in the 21st century with the message of love Jesus gave us.</p>
<p>To include the wider community and be open to all groups. This is not related to sexual orientation, rather non-Catholics as well as Catholic youth who are not engaged with the Church.</p>
<p>I think priests should be able to marry and have their own families. After a couple have had their family, contraception should be allowed. Divorced people should be able to get married again in a Catholic Church if it wasn't their fault that the marriage broke down.</p>
<p>God is asking us to include and raise the place of women in the Church, even to have women priests. To consider allowing priests to marry. To be a Church of the 21st century and respond to 21st century needs and issues. This would include freedom of choice regarding birth control and accepting the divorced, those in de facto relationships and gay and lesbian.</p>
<p>Be clear, confident, competent ambassadors of Christ. This looks like, among other things, being ready to speak up in the neighbourhood and in the marketplace for the reasonableness, the rightness and the necessity of all to examine the claims of Jesus for themselves.</p>

Increased need for inclusivity.
Increased role of women within the Church, and a more feminine understanding of the role of women and the challenges they face.
Child protection.
For the Church to modernising its ways—become more contemporary.
To pray to have an open mind and accept that the Church is going through a difficult time.
Inclusivity
Advocacy
Child Protection
My name is [-], I with my daughter have been part of [-] parish since 2017. I had sent an e-mail to [-] Catholic School Central Office. And now, I would like to share this matter to you, and this is involved my three kids differed life journey. To: [-] Catholic Schools Central Office Attn.: Secondary School Department for Caring Dear Sir/Madam, Good Morning, this morning, I would like to share what's my concern. In our life, has differed ages care needs. And some young people need us caring more and look forward, how to support and caring the young person to face their positive life. I had three kids, one is 25 years old, her name is [-], she has a good job after she hard study. One is 24 years old, his name is [-], he has grey journey at Secondary school period, I get hurt after his was involve a wrong secondary period. And now, we are need put more care with him, and support the real life and what's positive study and career life care to him, until now his still involve at in a study group and non-finish his Assessment period. And, the last one is 14 years old, her name is [-], is studying at Catholic [-], [-]. And, this 2018, at the Church, one day, I heard a student, [-], is a young boy no continue his valid life. May be this happen, I has put more care the school period about the positive life matter. My daughter has shared her school life to me, she was up sad what's her hear a grey feeling at the classroom. This has happened at last one and two weeks ago, my daughter heard the teacher share her own life. I have thanks for Mrs [-], she has replied my concern. After with mutual communication, the corner matter is settling. But, I has a strong feeling is how to report correctly to care the grey feeling person at the Catholic School area. Hope for the future, your term has more support all the teacher and all student needs. Thanks for your read and care. Peace in Jesus Christ, Ms [-] Date: 15 Nov 2018 (Please find out a continued letter in your *consider letter box)
I feel that God is asking us to look at the declining numbers of people attending Mass, especially the young.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Don't believe that younger ages aren't as good as some older people. —Don't allow gay people to be frowned upon. —Make everything equal so being gay is no longer a 'topic of conversation'. —Empower both genders to be included and treated the same. —Allow women to be in leadership roles. —Accept and include homosexual and LGBTQIA individuals. —Do not stereotype other people e.g. race, gender, religion etc. —Women need to be more included in the Church. —Any person with any sexuality, race or sex can become a leader in Church.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce a more diverse community that is welcome into the Catholic Church e.g. Allow people from other religions. - Allow and accept that the way the Catholic Church cooperates and runs will change. - Allow and accept that the traditional ideas of the Catholic Church will change and develop. - Introduce a more unique environment that youth members can relate to.

<p>- Stop putting labels on people because of their actions or backgrounds e.g. "you are a sinner" "because you don't completely follow God you are going to hell".</p> <p>- Women need to be included more in leadership roles in the Catholic Church, this is because both men and women are children of God and God would want everybody to be treated justly and right. This means allowing women to become priests and leaders of the Church alongside male leaders.</p>
<p>To live the way he wants us to and live the way that he wrote in the Bible, even though he didn't physically write it.</p>
<p>The world and society has changed so I think the Church has to change with the times. God would want us to be more accepting of everyone, more tolerant and kind.</p>
<p>Think God is asking us to be united with other religions as God's spirit is the same in all. To have a closer link with God through meditation, uniting mind, body and spirit. Also consciously being aware of God's presence every moment of the day. God is, I believe asking us to free up priests to marry if they want.</p>
<p>To help build an image of his Church more in keeping with the modern world while still retaining its core values.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be a welcoming, accepting and all-inclusive Church. I believe God wants us to let go of outdated and out of touch rules and hierarchical systems, which exclude and disenchant its Church and which push away and exclude its people. God is not interested in words and pomp and ceremony, God is for the people and with the people. God is in relationship, in the nitty gritty of life not found in archaic 'us and them' rules and systems. God wants Australia to lead the world Church in acceptance, peace, tolerance and equality.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be more inclusive of others. He would like us to practice what we preach and be more like Jesus. What would Jesus do must be at the forefront of our actions. God is asking us to be open to others and to change. We need to be aware there is sexual diversity in the community and help all. God is asking us to be more inclusive in regards the priesthood. He is asking us to use our own conscience, there are many people who have been ostracised by the Church and they need to be helped, perhaps with some of the money the Church has.</p>
<p>Catholics should revert to being examples for all Australians and all around the world to follow. Do not be misled by fashionable or populist themes—our religion and beliefs are perennial and not seasonal.</p>
<p>To be transparent and open to change. To move spiritual practice into the modern times.</p>
<p>To reflect on our current practices and traditions at this point. Look at how we can incorporate women, youth and disengaged Catholics. We are concerned with the disconnect between the clergy and the people at the grass roots. We could learn from Pentecostal churches in relation to publicity, marketing, music, youth and women—selling our message. Letting others know about all the good works of the Church e.g. St Vincent de Paul, Caritas, refugees and social justice initiatives. Creating parishes with more family and school involvement. To build on the openness through love and humanity.</p>
<p>One thing that I think God is asking is to make him proud of our Catholic faith. In so doing we have to take responsibility for the way our faith allowed priests to abuse their role and molest young males. We should deal with this openly, honestly, vigorously and with determination to make sure that those responsible are prosecuted and that it is never allowed to happen again. It is embarrassing to be Catholic because not only was this allowed to happen but then it was brushed under the carpet.</p>
<p>We think that God is asking us to help those people who are not as lucky as us. We have seen poor people looking for food to eat in garbage bins and we think God wants us to make sure they never go hungry. It is important to make sure all of these people have something to eat for every meal. We need to donate money to poor people because they don't have anything to eat and they can't live a long life without food to eat and something to drink. Think that we should give some blankets to people who might have to sleep outside on the grass or on the side of the road,</p>

because they would be very uncomfortable. They might not even have somewhere private they can go to the toilet or have a shower so we should make sure they have things to keep them clean. We think we should do a donation to the poor people so they won't be unhappy anymore. At Christmas, we should donate food so they don't go hungry at Christmas. We should love and care for these people and we think God asks us to even care for people we don't know.
Be kind and help others.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care—Animals, the world, others. • Be patient. • Love everyone. • Help others. • Respect others. • Be nice and kind. • Think safe. • Share—Food with strangers who don't have any.
Be kind, look after sick and hurt people, forgive those who have done the wrong thing, donate to poor people (food, clothes, money), look after our environment.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be kind to each other. • Be like Jesus. • Be polite and compliment others. • Look after God's creation. • Be helpful. • Be respectful. • Love other people. • Look after the poor/farmers and homeless. • Remember the soldiers—be peaceful.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect what God has made and follow his footsteps—Do not hurt anything that is living. • Look after and care about the environment—take care of the world, the environment and the wildlife. • Share your differences—Everybody is different, be yourself, it doesn't matter who you are, you are perfect, don't let anybody stop you from being who you are. • To have good feelings—Not to be angry or sad and to be good. • Trust—Trust in God when we are feeling down, trust in the Holy Spirit in Church, trust in family when you are scared, trust in friends when you are lonely and trust in Jesus through prayer. • Following Jesus' example—Respect others, teach others about God, help others in need and always be happy. • Respectful—Be a better person and help others. • Think positive and not negative—Be kind, don't start fights with other people. • Work as a team • Respect—Respect the world and all its living creatures. • Kindness—Faithful, happy, cheerful, loving, humble, honest like Jesus, giggly, help others, give peace and be generous • Respect—Respect other people's things and all that God has made. • Try to be like Jesus—Follow the mission of Jesus, love you, be you, never be mean and selfish. • Respect others and be kind—Do not hurt anyone and be kind to others in need.
Keeping Australia and the environment clean. Keeping Australia clean is important as a clean environment promotes a better community, which in turn promotes going to church. If our environment is clean it will thrive with nutrients from plants and keeps animals safe especially turtles because they can die from plastic. In conclusion, it was obvious that a clean environment and healthy Turtles would much benefit the Church's welfare. Don't turn away from faith. It's important to keep a strong bond with God and Jesus, it is important to have a relationship with him because you want to be able to share stories of God to other people. It is important to have faith in God and Jesus you are able to share sins and live with faith in your life. Homelessness. churches should give money to homeless people so they can live better lives. Homeless people should be given homes with lower rent. People should treat homeless people with respect. Even the smallest amount of money counts. People should make shelter for the homeless, Poor people should be allowed the littlest things. Caring for people with Disabilities. The Church should look after disabled people more because they might be having a hard time in life with nothing to look up to. So they try to have faith in the Church. People that are in wheel chairs should sit in the front row. They should make more ramps for people in wheelchairs and those that have crutches. People with a disability should be able to have faith in God. Help the Farmers in Drought. If we start fundraising for the farmers we could bring more people together. Help the farmers because if we don't we will lose a lot of our products like dairy, meat, milk, bacon and chicken. We should buy bales of hay to help farmers. If we don't help the farmers the animals will die of food and water shortage. In Church we could fundraise to get more products for the farmers.
To be like Jesus and have the qualities of Jesus in our everyday lives.
1. Continue Catholic Education. 2. Leadership—Courage. Don't Let others think for you. Support of others. 3. Women priests. 4. Welcome refugees and asylum seekers. 5. Encourage people to become scripture teachers. 6. A home is a right not a privilege. 7. Celibacy continues to be valued

but be optional for diocesan priests and bishops. 8. Theologians and scripture scholars be encouraged to lead open discussion into the possibility of ordination of women to the diaconate, priesthood and episcopate. 9. In light of recent scientific and social understandings of same sex attraction and gender issues, moral theologians and related experts be encouraged to study our Church's teaching on marriage to discern if our current understandings need to be changed/modified. 10. Rules for reconciliation—mortal sin only. 11. Encourage our children to say the rosary in a family situation. 12. Euthanasia for the terminally very sick people. 13. Assistance to those affected by climate change—drought, floods, rising sea levels causing refugees to flee from low lying islands. 14. Assistance to those fleeing violence, war, natural disasters, persecution, seeking refuge in Australia. 15. Moral leadership—to counter abortion, same sex marriage, euthanasia, surrogacy, drug abuse, gambling, prostitution, pornography, sexual abuse of children. 16. Loyalty—Determination—“Ask for help” is always given, example for others, speak up. 17. All clergy be given consistent support and supervision throughout their Ministry. 18. Focus always on Jesus Christ.

God is asking us to be more tolerant, loving and accepting, less judgmental, and to do all we can to reduce inequality.

Laity—The people are extremely frustrated and angry and feel a sense of frustration at being voiceless; Hierarchy/priests/Governance—The Church hierarchy needs to admit there are serious problems and therefore there is a need for change. Although the Church is not a democracy, it should strive for democratic principles in its governance. It is currently rule-bound and concentrates on fully ceremonial rituals and practices while ignoring the big issues that need change which are: • Leaders should ask “What would Jesus do?” Most of the time they don’t. Too often it is about preserving the institution; • Get rid of clericalism; • Women in leadership roles including priests, but not priests in the current model; • “Smell of the sheep”—leaders who are humbly ordinary; • Having married priests would improve the leadership. More natural; • Need to forego the trappings of power and be more humble. Jesus met people where they were at, regardless of status; • Need to change of model of training.; today priests in training study psychology—they need to be taught administration skills; • The Church needs to divest itself of its wealth, as Jesus taught; • The Church needs to advocate for justice, peace and the environment; • Moralising—needs to stop; • Leaders need a broader view—be aware of the issues facing their people; • The best sermons are those where the priest recites a personal experience. Often people don’t come to Mass because of the poor sermons. • Reflect the faith and beliefs of both clergy and lay people (a greater commonality through listening and understanding) of each other • More collective and inclusive use of the laity in Church processes (e.g. homilies) and in Church structures and roles in the Church’s institutions; • Change quickly in order to address and attract young people back to the Church community because young people know the stories of abuse that have been swept under the carpet; • To be inclusive of all—Catholics (traditional and progressive), women, men, non-Catholic, divorced, single and LGBTQI; • Focus on Faith formation and credible belief. • Priests who give over too much authority to the laity or who show openness and compassion to the marginalised (e.g. LGBTQI and divorced) are usually punished.

I think God is asking us in Australia to hold fast to the truths, traditions and traditional liturgical ceremonies of our Catholic Faith, which should be taught in their entirety to all students in our Catholic Schools, Teachers Colleges and all Catholic institutions.

We believe that God is asking Australia at this time of gender equality within the Church. Gender equality is one of the biggest up rising problems our generation faces. In recent decades, women in Australia have made significant strides towards equality with men. At universities, in workplaces, in boardrooms and in government, a growing number of women have taken on leadership roles, forging pathways for other women and girls to follow. We believe this should really be thought about in the Church. Equality and justice for women is a major deal to us and I'm sure to many other girls.

<p>Things we think should change at Mass: *Church to look modern e.g. couches, meal breaks, drinks. *Include everyone in ceremonies. *A time for ordinary people to join in the services like giving out the body of Christ. *A lot more modern. *Priest wear what they want. *Modern music. *Tell priest what your opinion on Christ is. *Food breaks. *Should stick to the traditional rituals but try and make it [f]un and easier to understand. *To make Church more appealing to community, make it more appealing to the youth. *Couches as seats in churches * Normal clothes for priest for their comfort. *Seats more comfortable. * Meal breaks !!</p>
<p>Equality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —To have more people of colour in the Church —Everyone should get paid equally —Priests should be men and woman and should wear casual clothes as everyone is equal and should be seen the same. —That all woman are respected and treated well by all. —The Church should be more inclusive towards gay and people apart of the LGBTQ community as they are humans and deserve equal rights. —People with disabilities, homeless people and ex felons should be have equal rights and should have the same access to job opportunities. —Priests should be allowed to marry who they choose as love should be experienced by everyone. People shouldn't subject priests to a life without marriage.
<p>To care, nourish and respect our land/countries, we need to create more equality and respect everyone equally. We need to share what we have and not take all the supplies for ourselves but instead leave some for the less fortunate.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Nuns should have more say and equality. —Not to have any stereotypes and gender qualities affect decisions. —Equal decisions. —Everyone has an equal say. —Female priests. —Gay should be more expected. —To open up all leaderships to women. —Gays should be accepted. —Respect other decisions. —Include everyone and don't give advantages and disadvantages to gender, race, religion and wealth. —Gay equality more welcome. —More inclusive of everyone that is different. —We need us to have equality equal pay and jobs for women and men.
<p>God wants us to do likewise. I think that it should be easier to annul a marriage. I think gay people should be more welcome to the Church. People should be allowed to get divorced. God wants us to work as a group of believers to change for the better. God wants us to have a belief that we are strong. God is asking us in Australia at this time is with the Church to include gay and lesbians more. God wants us to put faith into him/her. They need to be more inclusive of LGBT+ people. God wants us to focus on the Catholic beliefs.</p>
<p>Divorced people do not go to Communion. People feel that they need to fit into the Church's laws. Jesus ate with 'sinners' but who in the real world does the same? He associated more with the marginalised than the converted. People are steering away from sacraments etc. due to personal circumstances (divorce, gay, living out of wedlock). The Church has discouraged people from going anywhere near the Church due to the way the marginalised are treated. Which priest do you listen to???? Inconsistent messages. We don't need to preach to the converted. We need to change the stigma attached to different situations. The gaps are only going to get bigger if there are no changes. Why are we not being more inclusive and accepting? 'Accept one another' but not if they are gay, divorced etc. Catholic teachers have been dismissed for coming out as gay.</p>

<p>These situations are driving people away from their faith. We are limited in our teaching of topics such as homosexuality and divorce come up. How do non-Catholics see Catholics??? (not in a good light) The Church needs to be more flexible to conform to today's society but it's not going to happen while the Church has such strict rules. Conflicting message of scriptures in terms of loving and being with a partner (i.e. marriage) Acceptance of changes in society for today's times e.g. gay marriage, divorce etc. Is the council in Australia going to make a difference knowing that the control will be with the Pope? Some priests are more open and caring about the person rather than sticking to the Church's rules—this is not consistent among priests. Accepting that the younger generation need to be enticed and engaged to attend Mass—need to change Masses to support this—more contemporary Masses are non-inclusive to families. Are families turning away from the Catholic Church to seek a more uplifting, contemporary Church? Homilies are not engaging. Music is boring. Catholic Church does not make allowances. E.g. choose abortion, priests to share homilies to get ideas. Priests to be non-gender specific.</p>
<p>To persevere, and stick to the faith which is true. Continue to administer and receive the sacraments. Spread God's word to non-believers. Offer people hope with the truth we believe. Look after the poor.</p>
<p>God is asking the Church to be inspiring to this generation and the next, to be tolerant, accepting and inclusive and to be open to change.</p>
<p>Participation of the laity in the development of the Church has been essential since its foundation. The virtually exclusive leadership of the clergy, (clericalism) is an aberration. The baptismal responsibility of the laity has been abdicated by most, and this is a form of sloth, which has paralysed Church's effectiveness in hearing the Holy Spirit and being good news for the world.</p> <p>Discovering Joy in life, (and the Church) is not a right but a responsibility. It is not the duty of the priesthood to entertain the masses, rather it requires the diligent effort of the congregation to promote joy among their fellow parishioners. When complaints are made of the 'boring' nature of the Eucharist, the inference that the priest is solely responsible for the atmosphere of the liturgy is untenable. If the laity put little or no effort into preparation of Mass, the capacity of any cleric to lift it out of the doldrums will be crippled. Music, choirs, rosters, school involvements, special themes, family participation etc., all necessarily rely on the enthusiasm and organisation of lay people to bring the joy and meaning of each liturgical event. Can the crying needs of families be seen as including the adult faith development of our unchurched members? Is it possible that the abundance of senior citizens in our pews could be resourced to lead a faith revolution in their immediate families? Much joy may well come to our wider family if such a project gains traction.</p>
<p>God would ask for tolerance and acceptance would he not. A loving and kind God would not support the suppression of others rights in intent!</p>
<p>Theme of our discussion: It is time to engage with the world in a humble, respectful and engaging manner. To share God's message in new ways and place our hope and confidence in the Spirit. We need to use our intelligence and gifts, stand with each other to advance God's mission.</p> <p>Other discussion points</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + That the Church reach out to Catholic Youth + Investigate why so few are practicing, support our youth + Reach out to "non-practising Catholics"—opportunity to connect with and realise Gospel values in action. + Support our priest with honest dialogue and feedback + Laity to step up—to help and guide the Church + Thank Catholics who are leading and making a difference- priests, schools, agencies and social, justice advocates + New Power structures—weighed to have laity, woman, marginalised recognised and included + Women In Church have more women in more power in Church + Shift from materialistic Self culture to a sharing non-materialistic loving relationship culture

+ Accountability—for those in positions of power who failed the Church to be held accountable
 + Strike down clericalism—religious who are driven by self
 + Address Climate Change seriously,
 Ways to address the above issues—

FORMATION

—Scripture—study and read daily, use commentaries.
 —Focus on the life of Jesus.
 —Focus on the New Testament and early Church stories, Church Tradition and Liturgy.
 —Play a role in maintaining liturgy and tradition e.g. reader.
 —Be open to all liturgy including Latin, Gregorian Chant.
 —Read the lives of the saints, writings of the Popes Social Justice.
 —Get involved e.g. SVDP, participate in social justice work.
 —See Jesus as the Social Justice Champion Faith Formation—At Catholic Schools, State Schools.
 —For adults; courses, books etc., strong, well-written on-line courses.

Re-evangelisation, Catechesis, Resources—More education opportunities for learning about the faith

- o E.g. before/after Mass
- o Youth groups
- o (Refresher) courses for all ages, work people friendly—Availability of catechetical resources, having somewhere to answer questions—Australian podcasts, understandable, at the right level of understanding, daily / Sunday readings
- o YouTube stations
- o Radio stations
- o Mobile Catholic libraries
- o Blogs
- o Video visits / guided tours for people who can't visit holy sites—Year 12 understanding of Catholic teaching, rather than Year 5-6 understanding—Ability of Catholics to explain basic concepts
- o Sacraments
- o Protestants vs Catholics—Understanding why / meaning behind traditions, rituals—Leadership / catechists' training—Focus first on active (engaged) Catholics, those who are interested in learning (if limited resources?)
- o Evaluate effectiveness of catechists program—Consistency and clarity of teaching between various Catholic groups—e.g. Jesuits being vocal about acceptability of same sex marriage seems contrary to official Church teaching?
- o Balance between adapting to changing world, but also standing firm on teaching (teaching vs being pastoral care of parishioners)

I think God is asking each of us to appropriate once more, as in the days of the early Church, the "joy of the Gospel". I believe this joy comes from the existence of a God who calls us into relationship with Him. We need to look constantly into our hearts to discern the presence of God in our lives. I am not talking here about God's presence in the Church. I mean His presence within us at an individual level. It is from the experience of this presence, and the ability and willingness to articulate it, that we can effectively evangelise non-believers and pass on the faith to our children. If we are not in touch with the working of God in our lives then we have no recourse but to hide behind the proclamation of Church teaching. This is of course necessary, but only later, because it is not this that will attract people to belief in God. The joy of believers will.

To achieve a closer sense of community within our parishes. We need to get to know each other. "See how those Christians love one another" needs to again become the sign of Catholics. I am now reflecting on my current experience of parish where the parish priest lives in a suburb several kilometres away, knows very few of those worshipping in our congregation and is uninvolved with the life of this part of his wider parish. This used to be a vibrant community before amalgamation

but is dying as those who have been integral to it age. We have no children under 15 regularly attending Sunday Mass. Even though we have a Catholic Primary School most young families don't attend Mass because the other part of the parish where youth are catered for is up to 15 kilometres away. Young parents bring their children for baptism but we never see them again. But, if a community were encouraged here, families could feel much more part of the local Church. We could be there for people as we used to be when babies arrive, when the elderly get sick and frail and can't come to Mass, when parents are struggling with the demands on them. We also need to engage overseas priests with the charism of the "Australian Church". Some of the priests from our local order seem to prefer the European model that formed them—which is entirely natural but not helpful to most of the parishioners. Certainly many are from other places, but very few from the background of our priests.
As Australians, we need to acknowledge our religious heritage and as such move forward as a Christian Country realizing we all are made in the image and love of God.
I think God would like a Catholic Church that is united not divided. I think God would like all Australians to view other religious groups as co-workers not enemies. I think there are some members who express fear and hatred towards other Religions because of misinformation given to them by groups within the Catholic Church. I think God would like all groups within the Church to practise harmony and understanding. I hope God would like to see the Catholic Church become a more welcoming institution where all people can experience friendship and celebration. My experience is that our Church is becoming a more insular, closed community, which is difficult to 'break into'.
To get a political leader who will actually make a positive change and does something to help and benefit people.
To accept those who can no longer live in their country because of war and evil, to listen to people and accept everyone equally, to try our best to create peace and stop evil and to forgive those who have wronged us.
I think God is asking us to kind and follow Jesus actions. To follow the law and don't do anything that will harm others.
To love one another and forgive everyone, to respect everyone and everything, treat your neighbour as you would like to be treated and treat everyone as an equal.
God wants us to take care of the environment, stop war, equality and God also wants us to help refugees.
God calls us to stop climate change and stop poverty.
I believe God is asking us in Australia to live by his example of the main message of love. I think God is asking us to reach out to those countries of third-world status to equalise the Government so genders are treated equally, children are educated fairly and this world can grow up to love one another. Another thing God is asking us to do is to look after our Earth/environment, to be influenced by the Indigenous way of living so we can understand the value of the land. We need to respect the land, even if it is just knowing that the land owns us.
I believe God is asking us to bring peace and more good into this world. He would like everyone to come together as one to stop the evil.
—More fans in the Church—Comfortable seats—Air con/heating in the Church—Sausage sizzle after Mass—More toilets, bubblers within the Church—Bigger churches—Bigger screens so it's easier to see off them—Shorter services for children—Women priests—More roles for women—Diversity within the Church—Nature around the Church—Outdoor services.
A yearly Christmas dinner for the homeless. Homeless shelters. To shed more light on violence against women, shelters and a hotline. Better animal care. To have more churches available in rural locations. To have more charity awareness in Australia for young people to get involved. Provide money to farmers who are affected by drought. More fundraisers and donations available. To have more donation points for people in 3rd world countries. To have more charity works available for people to sign up.

We as a group think God is asking us in Australia at this time is becoming and having more available youth groups so more children can involve themselves in Church activities. This will make Church a place where everyone is comfortable and happy to go and so kids can be entertained and not bored easily. We also think there should be more Church times and dates during the week so people who can't make Sunday Church can come on another day and take part of the rituals and Church activities.

Whatever I think God is asking of us at this time, is something the Catholic Church doesn't want to hear and won't appreciate. Basically we need to unify the denominations. Do away with the religious aspects of what you do, and get back to following the example of Jesus and believing the Bible. Don't carry on with the "tradition" because that's flawed from the outset. Jesus said "Take up your cross and follow me", not "you can only follow me if you've done your First Communion, Confirmation, baptism and reconciliation in our Church". Do away with all of that. Dialogue with other faith communities. Build bridges with other churches and those who you've traditionally ignored. Do away with the idea that "our faith tradition is the only one that is the right one and all others be damned" and start again being inclusive and forward thinking.

1. God is asking us to treat each other like we would like to be treated, with kindness and respect. That includes every person we directly or indirectly encounter, refugees, homeless on the street, colleagues, family members, everyone. As members of the Catholic Church, we should take this message everywhere, but much, much stronger, let our actions show that we mean it. Both in the preaching and in the actual involvement in advocating and acting out the "treat everyone as you would like to be treated" motto. 2. Another thing God is asking of us is that we must embrace all genders into our Church. So many females are doing the good works of God as we look around the parishes, and yet, there is still this male only establishment making all the rules and decisions. 3. I think God won't have a problem also to let people with a family life to come into the "priesthood". Would love to see a female bishop who is also a mother and wife one day soon! If we are asking our politicians to change their attitudes towards today's women, why aren't we asking our Church to do the same! If we don't change, our Church will at most survive for one or two more generations! 4. Many of today's young people are very social conscious, and spiritually deprived, implementing the above will attract the younger generations as they see the practical and inclusive face of our Church.

St Vincent de Paul [-] response -What is God asking of us in Australia at this time? TO BUILD A LONGER TABLE, NOT WALLS!!! To go beyond immediate family, immediate parish, immediate country. NOT to create US and THEM divides. To have forgiving hearts in light of the Royal Commission. To stay true to our God and Jesus in everything we do. To pray for those who are suffering. Recognition and amends and better treatment of our first peoples. Women to have an equal footing in Church structures/roles. Forgiveness. To love one another regardless of ethnicity, status, race or religion. More activities for faith formation at parish level. Reconsider the priesthood. Could lay people have more of a role? To elevate women to the ministry of deacon. To listen and learn. To give time. To share and communicate. To pass on information. To help someone. To be grateful for what we already have. To be gentle with outsiders. To share what we have with other who have very little. Fairer distribution of wealth To build a Church, which is much more inclusive and aware of the many who feel alienated from present Church structures. To learn to be more welcoming. To view spirituality from the here and now. Discovering from our history but challenging for an awareness of the future. To strengthen our youth ministry. To pray that our religious leaders have love and compassion in their hearts to lead in addressing issues of domestic violence, crimes against children including crimes of the clergy and religious members. To improve communication within our own communities especially with our priests. To be willing to help, ALWAYS not expecting anything in return. To walk with the poor and offer them more than just material things. To search for and pray for God's guidance (ourselves) and for our leaders so that we live in harmony and respect each other's beliefs, economies and cyber-

securities. To be a good example for the next generation. To teach young people to share. To be radical disciples. Help those nobody else wants to help. To share our resources, money and time.
God is asking for acceptance within the Catholic Church, with a focus on acceptance and equality (gender, race, sexual orientation etc.) and the core values of love, honesty and respect, rather than a focus on traditional methods of delivery. God would be willing to change the delivery of his teachings, while keeping the core values the same, to cater for changing the world and future generations, to make the Church more engaging for younger people and focus more on current issues.
Formation of priests, role of priests and marriage of priests.
The Church needs to become more contemporary: reflecting the values of society. Allow priests to marry and female priests to be ordained. Acknowledge, resolve and healing from historical, institutionalized crimes and be accountable for them. Accept love is love, support of all marginalised members of society. Become more attractive for young people and create a more joyous celebration of the Mass.
Acceptance of all people, marriage of priests and ownership of past wrongs, making it young people friendly.
Accept and adopt modern ideals, branding of Faith needs to be understood, who, what, where etc.
Same sex marriage, women to become priests and to not exclude anyone.
God is asking us to embrace the true teachings of the Jesus story that focuses on love and forgiveness and break the bonds of the institutional Church that is pushing the young people of our Church away. God is asking that the faith formation of our priests produces a dynamic leadership style in our Clergy that mirrors the teaching of Jesus that bring faith communities together and embraces all age groups and does not alienate people on the basis of their sexual orientation.
Please see attached Post It Responses to this question in the following topic areas: 1. Clergy. 2. Laity. 3 Operations (Organisational Structure, Governance and Finance). 4. Schools and Education. 5. Society and Ecumenical Relations. 6. Other. The Top topic area populated was School and Education.
I think that God is asking us to look closely within ourselves at how we are connecting as a local, national and international community. God is asking us to live, act, think, pray and treat others in the same way as Jesus did.
That women have an EQUAL role in ALL levels of Church hierarchy from parish priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals and the pope.
I think God is asking for change, he doesn't like the way we haven't adapted to society and I think he wants us to change that, and be more accepting, just like Jesus was accepting of anyone and everyone.
At the present time we are looking to our heads of Government, some Church leaders to make informed and ethical decisions to help us all within our lives. People are trying to do the best they can, working within unrealistic restraints. People are looking outside themselves to cope with everyday life here on earth. They have continual stress trying to meet basic needs, dealing with crisis, personal problems, addictions etc. As a result of my queries as to why people no longer go to Church is that these outside influences are time consuming and when they do go to Church, these issues are not discussed at Sunday Mass level. Yes there are groups they can attend but it needs to be discussed at the pulpit first with a corresponding Bible text to give people an 'aha' moment and be given a life line at that stage to reach out to specialized areas. I left the Church a long time ago and was only brought back by a 12-step program. I think the first 4 steps are the most powerful. Admitted we are powerless, that our lives have become unmanageable. Came to believe a power greater than us can restore us to sanity. Made a decision to turn our lives over to the care of God. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. After recently reading Father Chris Riley's book, I take an adaptation of a quote from him. We've got to have the

courage to demand greatness from ourselves, no matter what might be holding us back, because God loved us so much that he gave us his son Jesus Christ and he gave us each other to help out along the way to our final intended destination.
God is asking us in Australia the same as the rest of the world is being asked. Look after each other and look after the world we live in. The same as we have been asked forever. It's a simple concept but we haven't mastered it yet. I'm sure that if we asked God that questions the answer would be, "keep trying, you haven't passed the test yet".
God is asking us to be inclusive of all people. It is my view that He sees us all as equal. I firmly believe that Gay people are born exactly as He intended. I believe it is a test on humanity, which we need to overcome. He is asking us to welcome people we have previously condemned.
Man-made rules that are now outdated and no longer relevant to today's society. I have travelled overseas and seen grandiose bishop's Palaces, and learned of the homes 'down town' where his wife and children lived. Interesting celibacy! We have heard of the abusive priests now coming to justice. How do we trust priests again? We need to have open, honest dialogue in Church—that includes having a say in parish decisions, being told where our money is spent, etc. What happens to money put into envelopes for prayers?? Why pay?? What is the difference between my prayers and those paid for?? How do I know that a Plenary Indulgence gets someone into Heaven? Etc etc. So many questions and so few answered.
Personal sanctification.
He is asking us to update our complete approach to the liturgy in order to engage the young.
Submission to Plenary Council from [-] Catholic School Teachers and Staff. Following discussion as outlined in the Plenary council documents the staff of [-] Catholic Primary School highlighted the following areas of concern and areas of commendation. We would like a Church that lives the Gospel. A getting back to original teachings where actions speak louder than words. Not fire and brimstone but actioning the gospel in real ways. Follow through actions not words. Closely linked to living gospel teachings is Social Justice. WE want a Church that exhibits strong social justice, reaching out to those in need. What is the Church doing for refugees? How many spare beds are there in our parishes houses? In our monasteries? Be active models of Christ. We would like a Church that is uniting all people and being welcoming of all where they are at. i.e.: race, colour, age, gender, religion. We would like to feel confident in our beliefs. Or How to be Catholic today. What is our spirituality as Catholic school teachers, as clergy? WE note that the Anglican Church know their Scripture and seem better able to articulate their beliefs. Is this because of memory verses? We ask for a reformation in our Church. In clergy, by allowing married people and women to act in THEIR Church more, revitalise youth Masses and indeed all Masses, Follow a brotherhood model rather than an hierarchical model. We ask the Church to come together as one. God is asking us to re commit to our faith but how is this faith expressed today. There is no clear leadership from the clergy, in fact there is disruption from the clergy. We would like the Church to take humble responsibility for the actions of her clergy. To take responsibility for past sins and lead through example. Open up the halls and churches to the homeless and marginalised. The Church should be more courageous to speak up for refugees, abortion, school funding. Take a stance. 'Catholic' is unpopular so let's be unpopular for all the right reasons. Be responsive to current issues. To triumph over the huge betrayals that have taken place not through arrogance but through humility that allows God's grace to heal, restore and beckon once more. We want liturgy to be relevant and accessible. This will mean that a 2000-year tradition will look different in different communities. The Church must develop an open mindset. We want the Church to change its attitude to her people. To appreciate that God is in his people. To be inclusivity and acceptance and to be nurturing. There was a lot of hurt on staff from both young and old how they had been involved in good activities but were shut down by the clergy. The people are willing but need a voice- open mindset required. Grassroots religion will look different in different places. Compiled from staff notes by [-] REC [-] [-]

To be more inclusive of different nationalities and new members of our parish. To evangelise and reach out more to young people who are the future of the Church.

Heroic holiness from everyone i.e.: laity, priests, bishops and religious. Catholic Schools that are truly teaching Catholic Doctrine and have an authentic Catholic culture. Sound doctrine—the true teachings of the Church have had a profound impact on my life. Unfortunately, this did not come from the Catholic School system in Australia. My parents whom I admire deeply had to take us out of the Catholic Schools and put us in State Schools to save our faith. They taught us the teachings of the Church at home. I am deeply grateful to them and for their example as it was a very bloody battle. Out of all my friends in a class of 30 only 3 still practice their faith. God always uses these sufferings for a greater good and later when I went to university, I was so happy to discover Opus Dei. The members and the priests were like a gift from heaven. I had to even pinch myself to make sure I was not dreaming. They prayed, went to Mass daily, confession weekly, spiritual direction for those who wanted and spiritual formation i.e. talks, recollections and retreats available. Soon God showed me my own vocation to Opus Dei. I know this was due to the example of my parents and those holy priests who prayed and truly loved God above everything. We had a holy priest in our parish who would pray before the Blessed Sacrament every morning before Mass. God was truly the centre of his life and mission. The example of priestly celibacy leads us to God and raises our hearts and minds to something greater, a greater ideal ... making Our Lord's own universal heart and generous availability present here and now; the example it gives of putting God at the centre of our lives and not our own egos, desires, etc. We need and want strong leaders to faithfully guide us and encourage us to aim for those higher ideals, by adhering faithfully to the truth and full teachings of the Church with the guts not to water things down. How...

I think God is asking us to focus on only 3 things: worship Him, take care of the poor and thirdly, evangelise. We have focused too much on the Church as an institution rather than the mystical body of Christ. Our parish spends way too much energy on raising money for its buildings and virtually nothing on evangelisation consequently our parish numbers continue to shrink! We have two churches and effectively one parish and barely enough numbers for one congregation. Why not sell one and give the money to the poor? If people won't travel a few KMs extra to church then our faith is too weak. The current model is not working we must rationalise and become less dependent on imported priests. Let's face reality!

We need to propagate the faith. One way of doing this is to encourage Mass attendance. The question arose about why parents and their children are not attending Mass. It was felt that Spirituality does not seem to be 'in'. Music plays a big part in lifting emotions and leading to Spirituality. We have all heard the statements that "Mass is boring" "It never changes". We wonder what the Christian City Church has that we don't. If only we realised that God was truly present at Mass, we would want to attend Mass every day. Another question arose: "Have we asked children of all ages what they would like to experience in Church?" Other comments: Get the parents to Mass and the children will come. We should look at the Church's rules on Mass attendance. We should consider married clergy and ordination of women. We need to be steadfast in our faith and propagate it within our parish. We should have tolerance for other beliefs. Keep praying to Him and put him first.

Our chosen topic was: "We need by our actions to show boldness and courage" Christ is reaching out to us through the Plenary Council and we must respond with actions. We discussed how (sometimes within our own families) the opportunities often arise when we need to be courageous. Some examples: When a grandchild announced she planned to marry in a park, the grandmother asked 'Why not in a Church?' When family gathers for a meal to say Grace even if some are uncomfortable about it. When workmates or friends outside the Church ask questions about our faith, to respond with courage and boldness, explaining what our beliefs are. We also need more public praying within our Church such as 'Prayer for Vocations'. We can resolve to do more for our parish by following the good example of other parishioners. We must find ways of

supporting our clergy. We should discern and follow Jesus' teachings by caring for and accepting others within our parish. We should receive warmly those of different faiths.
I think He is telling us, 'You can do nothing without Me'. I think He is asking us to let Him be in control by seeking and allowing the Holy Spirit to move in power through the charisms, to find ways for this to be a normal part of every prayer (liturgical and otherwise), every meeting, every planning session, every staffing decision, every ministry (lay and clerical). Do that diligently and most of the problems we want to see fixed will be fixed almost overnight (reverence, engagement of youth and young adults, vocations, desire for catechesis, desire to contribute in service, desire to spread the good news of Jesus, hunger for the sacraments, effective preaching etc). Everything else God is asking of us can be found in <i>Novo Millennio Inuente</i> and <i>Evangelii Gaudium</i> . How to respond collectively, in Australia, is what we should be talking about (not the bones of contention that go nowhere useful: married clergy, women priests, loosening 3rd Rite of Reconciliation rules, etc.).
I believe it is time to return to our roots and stop rejecting our Catholic heritage. We need to return to tradition and orthodoxy and have firm and clear teaching on faith and morals. To get orthodoxy and to hear beautiful music today in the liturgy, we need to go to the Latin Mass, but we shouldn't have to. It should be available to everyone everywhere. Unfortunately, worldliness and secularism have crept into the Church, e.g., an attitude of trying to excuse sin under the guise of mercy, using inclusive language (changing Sacred Scripture which no priest has the authority to do), etc. We also need to stop blurring the roles between clergy and laity. Each has their own role to play. A blasé and casual attitude towards receiving the Eucharist is a big problem. Communion in the hand has contributed to this, as well as lay Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Unfortunately, I have witnessed quite a few incidents of the Sacred Host being profaned or even desecrated by people in the pews. It's time to stop glorifying Vatican II (which made no infallible pronouncements) and acknowledge that it had a negative effect on the Church, i.e. liturgical chaos, crisis of faith and morals. And Catholics left in droves at the time as they didn't recognise the Church for all ages. People left the faith after Vatican II and leave it now because the practice of the faith has become so mediocre—it doesn't inspire, challenge or evangelise.
A dogmatic council of the sacraments. To return to the true Mass and the sacraments.
Church not relevant in the modern world. Ironical to listen to priests talk and preach about marriage, family life. Nothing relevant to engage children. Be open minded, preaching that divorce is a bad choice and therefore people cannot take communion drives people away from the Church. Priest should have families as it is not healthy to condemn behaviour of others while you listen about child sexual abuse. We keep hearing that parents need to encourage kids to come to Mass. How do we do it if the Church is not helping? Be modern, be open-minded, don't tell kids off for being loud.
God is asking us to be faithful to the magisterium of the Church, which is guided by the Holy Spirit. Catholic meaning universal discounts the idea of an Australian Church, we are one with the Church in Rome. It is NOT a democracy. Our faith is based on Scripture and tradition and as stated earlier, guided by the Holy Spirit. There needs to be a renewal of the Church teachings as most Catholics are ignorant of these.
Speaking as a music minister for more than 10 years in Australia and Malaysia, I think we can let go of some of the more esoteric norms on the canon of approved hymns for Mass while keeping to the spirit of the guidelines in Catholic Worship Book (page xx). That we are losing young people to the likes of Hillsong (which one of my sons and his fiancée attend) contrasts the dynamic musical legacy of other Christian churches with our overly traditionalist approach. While I personally don't appreciate the mega churches' rock festival atmosphere, I think we could do with a breath of fresh air in the corridors of our liturgical music traditions. My old parish in Kuala Lumpur ([-]) uses many lovely hymns that are not in the Australian canon, including some I learned from a Jesuit priest choirmaster as a young man. Small Catholic communities in the less developed world are often more vibrant than many I've seen in Australia, not least because there

are so few of them and they continue to be oppressed in subtle and not-so-subtle ways. The clerical child abuse scandal is both a symptom and an expression of an ossified hierarchy. I have not heard of anything similar in Asia or Africa, at least not on the scale we've seen in the West. If my views come across as being too radical, I would add that I don't think my Catholic upbringing has been less conservative than that of my oldie mates here. Indeed, my traditional theological views on Facebook (as [-]) cast me as a staid staunch Catholic... not that there's anything wrong with that.

I think God is asking us to be an adult Church, which fosters real intentional faith and discipleship in adults. I think God is asking us to develop transformative relationships with Jesus Christ which permeates every area of our lives. I think that parishes have put a disproportionate amount of resources into ministry to children: Catholic schools, sacraments of initiation, SRE in state schools and youth groups, and we really have very little to show for it. Generation after generation "age out" of Church at the end of either primary school or high school. I would like to see us redeploy our energy and resources into ministry with adults, with the intention of shaping the faith of adults who can then evangelise their own children. We should evangelise adults. Whilst we have often thought that reaching children was the way to reach their parents, by now we can see that this doesn't really work. We can have events like school grade Masses, which attract parents who want to, come and see their children "perform", but this doesn't change hearts, doesn't evangelise the parents. What works? It's long, slow, intentional and labour intensive work: small groups such as books clubs, Bible studies, alpha groups, and mentoring and accompanying.

Married priesthood. Equality for women including access to the priesthood. Third rite of reconciliation. Recognition of divorced Catholics as full members of the Church. Recognition by the Church of the need for contraception. Equal treatment for all including the right for gays to get married in the Church (how can the Church discriminate against a segment of the community who were born a certain way).

God would ask people in Australia and the world to stop offending Him. To remember that he is the only God, loving Merciful and Just. He created the universe in seven days. He gave us six days to provide for our life and He kept one day for Himself but we took that from Him too. (Nobody has time to go to Mass on Sunday anymore because there are other things to do). God would ask us to be OBEDIENT to His Commandments, to remember He sacrificed His only Son for us, to have more RESPECT and REVERENCE in Church (no talking), dress with modesty, love one another, be generous, charitable to those in need, to have respect for life God gave us. He has to decide when it's time for us to go to our eternal life. God would want us to remember He created a man and a woman to be joined together. God would say to His priests be HOLY and RESPECTFUL of others and not cause scandal especially with children.

To live the word of Jesus, understanding Jesus spoke in parables knowing by doing that his words could be adapted to all cultures and all times. It is a time the real conservatives of the Church understand the Bible is not to be taken literally but to interpreted and applied to the circumstances of the current times. More and more I see we need to forgive our enemies and love them with everything we have.

Australia used to be a Christian country, if not Catholic, but this has been eroded by the increase of Muslim fundamentalism. The Catholic Church should be calling all Christians and Catholics to pray that our faith and belief in God is retain and in fact enhanced. As a whole Australians are accepting of other faiths but there is a point at which that acceptance should be questioned when it undermines and in fact degrades our Catholic faith. God is calling all Australian Catholics to speak up and pray that our Catholic faith is sustainable and moves ahead with our modern times without removing the reverence and devotion that it is built on. Many Catholics are divorced but there is no avenue for those people to get together and meet other people in the same situation. God wants the Church in Australia to accept that divorced people would like to meet other Catholic people and there is little if any meeting point to facilitate that. In past years—up to about 1980—at school there was the Young Catholic Society (YCS) and then after school one would join

the CYO (Catholic Youth Organisation) ... now there is nothing! ** God wants the Catholic Church to reinstate and facilitate groups and meeting points where there is mix of social activities that are appropriate to age, as well as spiritual opportunities e.g. Mass and volunteering.
Nature is a reflection of God and his beauty and we need to understand that we are stewards of our environment, both our physical environment and our faith environment. By looking after our physical environment we are able to be reflections / images of God to our faith community and beyond * Think about what we are doing to our flora and fauna and the oceans that surround us. * Think of our country and what lies ahead for it.
To: Address the sexual abuse issue by repenting, making reparation, promising to never let it happen again and introducing systems to protect the vulnerable. Change and modernise the governance structures of the Church so that we stay relevant and find ways of including disenfranchised members. Build parish community so that we can strengthen our own faith and reach out to others. Encourage and educate youth and young adults in their faith development.
I think God is asking us to know and acknowledge Him more. I would suggest that the Church restart to teach everyone more about REVERENCE, esp. reverence for Our Lord in the Tabernacle. So many people go into a Church and genuflect to the Altar rather than the Tabernacle where Our Lord is, but it is not their fault if they are not being taught by leaders of the Church who would walk past a Tabernacle without so much as a pause in their stride. If a priest shows and teach reverence, I think it'll make a huge difference to people and their beliefs. Our Faith is one of the Presence of God in our churches, but if He is not acknowledged and recognised, then we are diluting the strength of our Faith, what makes a Catholic Church different to a Protestant Church? "He is present in a true, real and substantial way, with his Body and his Blood, with his Soul and Divinity." Catechism Compendium 282. If Jesus is present in our churches, then why is He being ignored more often than not? Ignorance is the cause of such neglect; I would request that the Church in Australia starts to concentrate on how to bring that reverence back, starting with leaders of the Church.
I think priests should be allowed to marry if they wish. Women should be permitted to be priests—they can have a calling to the priesthood just as much as men. Married deacons should be allowed to become priests. If people wish to know more about the Catholic faith and perhaps convert they shouldn't have to go through a programme such as the RCIA. One size does not fit all! In other words, some people might prefer a one-on-one session with the parish priest and not have to go through all the various ceremonies entailed in the RCIA programme.
It has been said that a parish priest needs to have the qualities of pastor teacher and administrator. No doubt, a bishop needs to exhibit the same qualities. I wonder if bishops and priests are overburdened with administration to the detriment of their functions as pastor and teacher. Perhaps some worthy candidates for the episcopacy may be reluctant to take on the job because of the heavy burden of administration. Perhaps the position of Vicar General could be given more importance. The bishops then may have more freedom to engage with their priests and people.
My overwhelming response after sitting with this question for a while is: God is calling us to shift our fixed gaze from looking internally and being focused on our own survival and diminishing influence. From being preoccupied with what it will take to survive, or to get the young people at Church. Rather God is asking us to look beyond ourselves to how our faith calls us to witness to God's love in this land, this time and this place. As the Catholic Church of Australia, we are called to "to bring glad tidings to the poor. To proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." (Luke 4: 18-19, Isaiah 61: 1). For us, that means speaking words of justice, compassion, inclusion, unity and hospitality, in our own communities, but also in the public space. Pope Francis has led the way on a faith response to climate change; it is up to us to live that out in Australia, to ensure our leaders understand the importance of our relationship and care of our creation and common home. By our actions and our voices, we must continue to demand better for refugees. We have an amazing

Indigenous Catholic spirituality. I believe the rest of the Church and the nation can benefit much from learning, listening and hearing the stories of our First Peoples. There is much good the Catholic Church is doing in our communities, in our schools, hospitals, our volunteers, our chaplains and community services. We need to reconnect these with our faith. We need to go to people, rather than expect people to come to the Church. Finally, in our own communities, we need to be far more inclusive with each other. It saddens greatly, that each week I see people who are regular church-goers who do not get up for Communion. I am struck by what it is that makes them feel they cannot participate in this sacrament. Surely this is not what Jesus intended by the Kingdom of God. We have much work to do in healing the Church and in repairing damage done to others by child abuse. We need to always start with forgiveness and care of the victim, rather than defence. We still see this today, and we'll not move on until there are some real conversations about this within our own parishes. We are also called to work far more closely with brothers and sisters from other churches and those of other faiths. The Catholic Church in Australia does very well as some of these relationships, but they are often not shared more widely. We as individual Catholics and a Church can play a major role in building a more united, inclusive and welcoming nation.

God is asking us to live our lives based on the new commandment. Love and forgiveness. God wants us to be inclusive and openly invite ANYONE into the Church. We are not to judge others, we are not to preach about sin and hell. We must move in with the times and be open to changes taking place in our society. At the moment the Church and its teachings are autocratic and old fashioned. We need to put God and Jesus in today's context. What would Jesus do? Today Church must be welcoming, inclusiveness and participation in our sacraments without making them feel as outcasts.

I think God is asking us to reach young people with the saving message of Jesus Christ allowing them the ability to reach a Gospel Spirituality through idioms that are relevant to this time and place and speak to them.

To think less of 'self' and more of others. To look past consumerism and be grounded in faith.

I believe that God is asking the Church of Australia to improve our formation and understanding of our Faith. So many people, especially younger people, seem to be lacking basic understanding about Church doctrine. As someone of 17, I can honestly say that my experience of learning about the Faith at our parish has not been the best. Firstly, the homily is a prime time to teach people about the teachings of Jesus and how they are relevant today. The homily is not a time for Bible study. The Catholic Church does not compete with Protestant churches and therefore why do we treat the homily like a sermon? It could be used to teach the congregation so much that we can use in our daily lives as well as improving our formation about the Faith. Secondly, there must be a standard for those who teach the young in Catholic schools about Catholic doctrine. For someone to teach the doctrine must not they have to be at least practicing the Faith? Must not their beliefs i.e. gay marriage, abortion also be in sync with the Church? I believe that God is asking Australia to make this happen, to inspire people to come to Mass, Confession, Prayer because they want to out of love for God. The congregation is not taught to love God, to pray to him every day, to rely on Him for everything, to teach Him as a Father + Creator, to live our lives with Him. That is what we must improve. To help all understand and love the Faith.

He is asking for us to be strong and embrace the faith at this challenging time. More priest and holy people and vocations—youth involvement—that we have a clear understanding to what the Church is teaching and why.

Young people are slowly separating from Church following more 'fun' things because they don't understand the beauty of the Church or its works. More young people should be taught about the Church and its values so that they can make their own choice to follow God and his works. To promote the idea that Catholicism is not a tradition to be followed because of upbringing but rather a personal relationship with God. More people should get closer to God based on their own

choice rather than their upbringing. More followers of the Church rather than followers of other people.
New generation—young people are slowly separating from Church, being swayed by other Christian denominations such as Hillsong. These other forms of Christianity are relating better to the youth, using God's word to relate to daily life and hence find them more attractive. The Church needs hold current young Catholics and attract more to the Church by better expressing the teachings in homilies and better stating opinions on controversial issues. To promote the idea that Catholicism is not a tradition to be followed because of upbringing but rather a personal relationship with God. To show that the Catholic Church is open to anyone who wants to follow Christ. There are many stigmas about the Church that have gone around recently such as that Catholics are homophobic and these may have caused people to abandon their Catholic faith. We need to show that we have a love for all people, despite who they are. We need to teach the new coming generation the right things because at the moment, they may be being brainwashed by what the media has been saying about controversial issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -God is asking to be strong in our faith, and speak up for what we truly believing in. -To be united, no matter the religion. -Increase our knowledge and understanding on vocations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —To promote unbiased but important, truthful information of the Catholic faith for more people to understand —Increasing our strength and unity in faith. —Promote ecumenism and respect between peoples, religion, beliefs etc. —Speak up on the Catholic faith's beliefs and 'philosophy', rather than allowing biased media to explain. —Increase knowledge and understanding vocations.
Throughout society in Australia, I believe there is a common misunderstanding of the nature of sanctity and holiness. To many people the notion of 'vocation' and a 'call to holiness' is thought of as an ideal that only people who are very religious are able to relate to. Hence, I think it is viewed by some, especially those who are not religious as inaccessible and irrelevant. Therefore I believe that at this time God is asking of us not only to encourage mutual respect between members of the society, especially those that may have conflicting views and opinions on controversial political and social issues, and to foster understanding of the nature and role of the Church within society.
God is asking us to spread his word and to be united with people of all religions and cultures. He wants us to be able to stand up for our beliefs and to tell people when something goes against the Church.
I worry that the Plenary Council will become as a political talk-fest and no real changes will result. The Church of all institutions is historically slow to change. On the other hand, I wonder why we need two years to study this, when all the bishops, priests and all Christians need or have ever needed to do is ask: WHAT WOULD CHRIST DO? Did the abusers of children stop to ask themselves WHAT WOULD CHRIST DO? Did those who covered it up and allowed it to grow ever ask themselves WHAT WOULD CHRIST HAVE DONE? I belong to an ageing parish where attitudes to Gays is un-Christ-like. I know so many young gay Catholics who choose to work in the humanities (doing Christ's work on earth) having NOT lost their faith in God, but have lost their faith in the Church, being well aware of the Church's rejection. I know this because one of them is our daughter. She is most definitely our Gift from God. What do I think the Holy Spirit is asking of us in Australia today? I believe it is to love and respect every individual without condemnation and judgment. Jesus said 'Judge not and you will not be judged. Condemn not and you will not be condemned'. (Luke 6:37) If the Church were to take the initiative and be the first to truly embrace the rejected and outcast, for example the Catholic Gay population, then the Catholic Youth population would also return, knowing that this Church truly is for them as well.

<p>NATURAL family planning is something all women and men have a right to know about. It is the "safest" method and also there are no medical consequences of it. It gives the couple dignity and privacy and doesn't make them involve a third party in their most private part of their life. Impossible to find books about it in bookshops. Schoolchildren, girls and boys, have a right to this info and it should not be hidden from them. Pharmaceutical business should be kept out of this. Billings book should be given out to every school child. It is available, cheap, from Amazon. No reason not to distribute it. Priest should be allowed to marry to be in connection with society and not live an isolated life in the presbytery mixing with church-goers only. People would feel more connected with the Church if they could speak to a priest who has experience with families etc. Families could connect more with the priest as well. Jesus opened his arms to EVERYONE and not just to a little club. Priests marrying is a subject, which needs to be addressed seriously. It would be a way of connecting more people to the Church. It is also wrong to demand this unnatural way of life. Even if a priest is not allowed to marry he should live in the community, e.g. in a flat, and not in the isolated presbytery. This is what God is asking for us now.</p>
<p>Tell the bishops of Australia to allow women to become priests and have the priest appointment and removal depend on the parishioners. Not have foreign priests allocated until 50% of priests are female.</p>
<p>To move into the 21st-century. Christianity is now a minority demographic in Australia e.g. recent National Censuses. The Church's "gain and retain" Catholic membership through childhood catechesis and the sacramental program is not working in the 21st-century.</p>
<p>Develop a Church which provides a welcoming, loving framework to support an individual's relationship with God/Jesus. An open, compassionate, inclusive community of Faith: based on love and care and does not create barriers of exclusion.</p>
<p>Love Him in the Eucharist. Know Him in the gospel, go deeper in sacred scripture and traditions, truly live the virtues of charity without conditions, being faithful to the teachings of the Catholic Church; pray for more vocations in the Church.</p>
<p>We need to return back to the basics of Christ's Church. Modernism and political correctness should go, as evil reigns in these two policies. No Holy Communion in the hand (It is disrespectful to The Holy of Holies). Jesus should be received on the tongue whilst kneeling or genuflecting (where this is physically possible). All Tabernacles should be returned to the centre of the Church, as Jesus at the Last Supper, was not banished to the side or worst still, a side room. All priests (and I do know of some that would make Our Lord's Sacred Heart swell with pride), should do their best to imitate the amiability, love and forgiving Heart of Jesus. Some would say that this would only serve to turn people away; however with only a remnant left, I believe, that with The Holy Spirits' Power, the opposite effect would manifest, and the sheep will slowly return. More times for Confession, not just an hour a week for all.</p>
<p>We need to build a tolerant and loving community inclusive of everyone. There needs to be a dialogue with both the laity and the clergy about a changing attitude towards the hierarchical Church. The Mass, antiquated language needs to change e.g. 'and with your spirit' and the word 'consubstantial' in the creed. Adult education is needed. Younger people do not understand how the Church came into being and why the Church exists even though they have had a Catholic education.</p>
<p>I think we are being called to understand our faith better so as to be able to witness and defend the Church, and so that we grow in relationship with Christ. Catholic schools need to focus on teaching the faith, and emphasise the importance of the Mass and the sacraments. Our parishes need to do the same for adults, many of whom have had a patchy faith education at school and need further formation to assist them in their faith journey and to help the, educate their children in the faith. The Diocese needs to make better use of social media to advertise opportunities for faith development for adults, and parishes need to make clear our responsibility to continue to grow in our faith all our lives. Many Catholics never learn much more about their faith after</p>

school, and are deprived of the understanding of the Greta richness and beauty of our faith and the joy of an ever-deepening relationship with God through His Church.

A revolution towards holiness and reinforcing the family, and the steps that go towards that i.e. helping young people to respect themselves and understand their human nature, character building based on living a virtuous life, what a good relationship is, what commitment means, what a good courtship is, what a good engagement is, how to live a chaste and happy life in each period of their life, what is marriage and a lifelong commitment, how to persevere in one's marriage and love.

The Church in Australia has to look at herself in the light of the Gospel and question herself if She is what Jesus Christ is expecting of her.

What I think God is asking of all of us at the moment is to make a move from: Religion to Spirituality Clericalism to Service Church to Culture parish to Community Exclusion to Inclusion. The main issues I wish to address are: 1. The role of women in the Church. According to the 2018 statistics for religious in the Australian Church, 4,124 are Religious Sisters and that doesn't include the number of lay women who make up 80% of the pastoral work in parishes. The Diocesan priests, Religious priests and Brothers combined total 3,397. That's saying something! This issue was also brought up at the October Synod of Bishops in Rome where they even noted a desire among youth for a "greater role for women" in the Church. It was reported that "Young people asked for it with great force". If the subject of "Women in the Church" was such a big issue at the bishops' Synod, why then were women not included in the vote? Some clergy, who were voting members, commented on the exclusion of women from the voting process. The Superior General of the Jesuits commented that this exclusion signifies "discomfort, which is a sign that something is wrong." The Synod rules allow for "representatives" of religious life to participate (i.e. priests and religious brothers) why not religious women? How can they vote on such an issue when more than 50% are not represented? If all the women in the Church went on strike, the Church would collapse! Perhaps what God is asking of us at this time is to look at the way Jesus related to the women of his time and culture, especially when women were treated as second-class citizens with no voice. Jesus was inclusive and respectful of all the women he encountered, even adulteresses and prostitutes. It is no wonder then that His most loyal, faithful, and compassionate, followers were the women who stood by Him at the foot of the cross when others abandoned Him! 2. The "Institutional" Church I don't think Jesus ever talked about establishing an "Institution". He talked a lot about the Kingdom of God and the way to get there by loving God and our neighbour. I think young people are rebelling against the "Institution" of the Church because they are living in such a secular society, are better educated, and more accepting of all kinds of creeds and cultures. We were brought up to believe Catholicism was the only key to the Kingdom of Heaven, yet the younger generation are more accepting of other people's beliefs—whether it be Jewish, Buddhism, Hindu, Muslim, whatever. Young people today do not lack Faith. They have a spirituality that leaves us 'die-hards' for dead. Young people see the "Institutional" Church like an old building front with nothing behind the facade except child abuse and cover up.

To proclaim the Gospel to parishioners so they can evangelise to others and encourage a life of Prayer Reflection and Growth in terms of their Spiritual Life. To organise gatherings so people can mingle with parish priests to foster a sense of purpose on the Spiritual journey to grow in the image of God. To highlight the value of the Holy Mass and to emphasise the sacraments of Penance and Marriage. To help the laity see how to foster vocations to the priesthood and Religious Life and to Pray for these as a parish. To provide more Prayer Groups and Reflections on the Bible for parishioners. To immerse parishioners in the History of the Church by Newsletters or Electronic means. To foster social outings for Widows and the Youth of the parish. To highlight the value of Service through encouragement to join groups like St Vincent De Paul etc. To provide transport for the elderly of the parish to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. To organise different age groups to run the Choir and have a roster for Masses where they sing Hymns. To invite parishioners to give Witnessing stories regarding their journey in Faith and how valuable

and essential the Life of Faith is for their progress on earth and towards heaven. To evaluate the success of these initiatives after twelve months and to report back to the parishioners. To organise Mother's groups and Playgroups as a support for young Married people. To provide a Grief support group and a support group for the sick and lonely of the parish.
Start from scratch the time after the death of Jesus.
What does the original question 'at this time' mean? There are questions about the Church's attitude to: divorce, remarriage, contraception, IVF We are all God's children: we should not be defined by sexual orientation but by a God of Love—be an inclusive Church, where everyone is welcome regardless of their sexual orientation. Church needs to be a just Church, not just a Church: Remove discrimination against divorced people and same sex couples; a genuine apology and support for the abused is needed; clergy needs to be made accountable. Make celibacy an option for priests—allow marriage and relationships for clergy that the Church explains why my aunt was excommunicated for marrying a Protestant. Eliminate hypocrisy in the Church—Cardinals, bishops, priests and religious living in de facto relationships. Use of inclusive language will create a more inclusive Church: change language in the Mass to be more inclusive and return inclusive language to the scriptures. Church needs to be better at selling itself—explain why dogma is good; increase devotion to Mary; work to recognise the Church "as a people of God", to love God, to love your neighbour as yourself; focus on the joy of faith; take particular care of the very young; Mass is core of our faith, as is the consecration, there should be time after communion for personal thanks Church should present the positive work of the Church; Church should show more compassion-demonstrable just dealing; Laity should be able to question/challenge Church thinking and decisions made in our name; clarify our understanding of what reflects God's intention; More humility, less concentration on self-esteem in schools; to pray sincerely for more humility, wisdom and guidance for our clergy and congregations in fulfilling God's teaching to the apostles and to St Peter, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church". The Church should be a community of faith and Love as portrayed in the gospels. A community of people who are filled with the joy of the gospel, the joy. There has been a lack of care in our Church communities.
Clericalism is a Discussion: What is Clericalism • Boys club • Bureaucracy that runs the Church • Those that make decisions • Cronyism, cloistered political environment of hierarchical clergy—Can be some good aspects—Clerical structure: Council of priests a decision making body—What we need is a vertical structure, transparency and inclusion.
I think that the Lord is asking us to look more deeply at our Faith and at society. We are seeing a decrease in morality and family values in Australia, as well as a significant decrease in the numbers of practicing Catholics. What we need is to look more closely at what is causing this and how we can improve it. To this end, I think that we are being asked to improve the Liturgy in our parishes, make them more traditional, and encourage the use and celebration of the Latin Mass. We also need to look into and think about more traditional forms of Catholic values. Young people seek stability and have a strong sense of justice and tradition. We need to be encouraging the rich traditions of the Catholic Church if we wish to survive in Australia. We also need to tackle issues relating to the poor standard of religious education and catechesis in our nation.
God surely must be weeping at this time of political and individual racism and cruelty in Australia because the Church, apart from some very rare social-justice mavericks, does NOTHING. It is silent. Like the government it doesn't provide bold moral Leadership. The only time one sees bishops etc. in the news, on TV, is related to clergy sexual abuse. Pathetic.
I believe that God is calling us to be an inspiring, joyful, less rule-driven organisation, which welcomes all and is especially relevant to the youth of today. I believe that God is calling our clergy to be inspiring preachers who lift the heart of the congregation and make every effort to reach their audience understanding when their message is not being received as a result of boring, dull sermonising. I believe that God is calling us all to look beyond the aging population that regularly attend Mass, largely because of a fear of going to hell and reach the youth of today

with a heart-warming, inspiring message. I believe that God is calling us to atone for the wrong doings of paedophiles in the clergy and the psychological and physical abuses by many teaching clerics in the past.
To give prayerful and careful thought as to what is to be done to ensure that the Church continues to be a faithful witness to Christ in our Australian community ... and then systematically implement the recommendations
God is asking us to listen to Him and to allow his spirit to work in the Church. We have seen that spirit expose corruption, abuse and poor governance. I think that God is allowing the Church as we know it to suffer, die and be re-born into something more relevant and real. He is asking us to be open to new ideas and new ways of sharing and living the Good News as a Church. Jesus was always one to challenge the hierarchy of the Jewish Church about their hypocrisy and self-fulfilling ways and he is doing it with our Church. I think God is challenging the mindset of our priests and clergy to move away from unhealthy ways of living and being. He wants us to explore new and more relevant models of service and ministry in a rapidly changing, diverse world. Society no longer accord authority or the idea that there is one way of doing things—the Church does not and it remains closed (in its rank and file clergy) to radical change.
I believe God wants the Catholic Church to follow Jesus teachings rather than protect the Church hierarchy. The Church should have more of a focus on social justice in the way Jesus lived—supporting the oppressed and the marginalised. Some of these issues are marriage equality, equality for women in the Church, less judgement of others e.g. divorce, advocacy for refugees, prisoners, the Indigenous and victims of abuse.
I think the question is deliberately vague, which is an issue. The key issue facing the Church in Australia (and in other parts of the world) is concerning the ongoing sexual abuse of minors by clergy. Another equally concerning issue is the cover up that has been going on for decades. Thousands of lives have been destroyed by this, and "good clergy" have covered it up, only for the truth to come out decades later. Naming priests who have been found guilty by an archaic Church committee, when those priests are either already dead, or are protected by the statute of limitations, is abhorrent. God would be asking, "Why do we need to maintain the current infrastructure of a Church that is broken beyond measure, and facilitates the sexual abuse of minors by those in positions of power?"
God is calling for a great spiritual renewal for His Church. This includes clerical, as well as for couples and families, youth and children. Families, as well as marriages, are greatly in need of sound spiritual/moral support, and of 'evangelising' strategies. They need to know what the Church teaches and why. 'Humanae Vitae', NFP should be given a higher profile throughout the Church. We have had 3 generations of unformed Catholics, with little or no knowledge of dogma or doctrine; this has impacted terribly on the Church and the culture. There is a tremendous need for the Church to enlarge its healing (and deliverance) ministry, such is the woundedness of so many people. Confession must be made available much more frequently at parishes—and preached about more often from the pulpit. The plight of the defenceless unborn is far too ignored; this causes the greatest pain to Our Lord.
To get closer to God by all means.
I think God is asking what changes will be necessary for the Church to survive. I don't think what has worked in the past works (or can work) anymore. In particular, I don't think the "top down" model of the past can continue. By the "top down" model, I mean a Church which operates through two groups, the clergy and laity, where the laity has left the clergy to provide organization, decision making and leadership (spiritual and otherwise) in virtually all areas. That does not work anymore because there aren't enough clergy due to vocations dropping off. It also does not work because of the child abuse scandal, which has robbed the clergy of the moral leadership role it once had. Having outlined what I think God is asking for, namely, what changes are necessary for the Church to survive, I hesitate to suggest precisely what changes might be best. I don't think that is necessary, because the changes will either come about automatically

from the members of the Church, or it will wither away and die out, like other Christian denominations have done. However, I suspect that any renewal must come from the laity, rather than the clergy. I suspect that, just like the apostles and other followers at the first Pentecost, those who today believe in Christ and his teachings will have to work out once more at a grass roots level what might be possible and desirable going forward, and what changes will be needed for the Church, albeit a somewhat different Church, to continue and to flourish.

Enable our churches/parishes to be more a part of the community in sharing faith, bringing hope and working with others in charity. Our priests need to realise they are just like us and not despot of power over all things. I have worked alongside priests in many activities/vocations and found many to be either lacking in leadership /stewardship skills, small business skills and/or uncompromising even to the point of arrogance. The latter predominates even when their approach/MO is damaging to people and/or repels parishioners rather than bring more people to our Masses and community. There is little or no local supervision or management supervision of any kind. In Italy I am familiar with pastoral associates that are often married women with grown up children that have strong faithful principles, supported by parishioners and can model appropriate behaviours/approaches/skills and work with the priest with equal governance (accountability and decision-making). The current situation of priests in many churches/parishes is repelling rather than drawing people to our beautiful faith and Church communities. I am suggesting a new governance model in parishes connected to diocese.

God is asking us to help bring about reform and change within the Church and faith and the way it is practiced; he wants us to CHANGE to bring the Church into the present day making it more relevant and appealing, particularly to the next generation. Unless this happens, once the older generation die off so will the Church. The world has changed, so must the Church. Who said priests had to be celibate? Mankind not God. Who said women cannot be priests? Mankind not God. Women's status in the world has moved forward since Biblical times. Women are rightly equal.

(1) To be true to, and proud of, our faith in a very secular Western society. God wants us to act and look like Christians. (2) To reform Church governance in the wake of the Royal Commission and worldwide scandals. This includes listening to lay people and women much more and involving them in Church structures (not solely on child protection issues). (On a personal note, I sat through many of the Royal Commission hearings as counsel and I can say that in every case in which the Church failed to act appropriately, one can identify a failure by male clergy to listen to a relevant lay person (often a woman) who was involved in the events in some manner. (3) For our Catholic institutions—charities, schools, hospitals etc.—to proudly and energetically, but humbly, embrace and display, and live by, their Christian values.

To be free, open and to cherish the love of every person in the country as we are all “children of God” (Jn 1) and all people, no matter sexual orientation, race, marital status, background, income should be welcomed by the Catholic Church in Australia and “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 4). Church should be an engaging place for the community to feel united, not bored, and such an important faith should not die out with the old men who lead it. I am calling on serious gender equality, women priests and women representation in Church leadership to end the embedded sexism of Catholicism. I am calling on an end to the blind eyes on child sexual assault and abuse, and I am calling on all people who have a leadership position in the Church to stand for something which benefits the community and young people of Australia.

Plenary Council Submission—[-]. Priests should no longer be required to be celibate. This should be a choice for those called to the priesthood. Women priests should be allowed. Let's represent today's society; strong spiritual women can be great role models for both sexes. The Mass can be enhanced by using videos or cartoon/anime presentation, emphasising Christ's wise words and their relevance in today's world. Advertise subject material outside the Church re: Sunday Mass, so that passers-by can be drawn in to listen to the message. Make it relevant to today's issues i.e. discuss, graffiti, obesity, bullying, materialism, debt, gambling, computer gaming, drugs and

<p>alcohol, family abuse, family roles etc. etc. We must compete with today's social media and secular messaging. We just cannot die on the vine without standing up using all means at our disposal. The world is crying out for Christ's example to lead us on.</p>
<p>In regards the relationship of people with Our Lord, we need to go back to basics: praying within the family; going to Mass during the week (perhaps more Masses should be available, especially in the suburbs); parents talking to children about the faith; and helping everyone, especially children from the early years to develop a personal relationship with Our Lord.</p> <p>We need to provide ongoing religious and spiritual formation to people: from their childhood till the end of their lives: *Of young people, after school, perhaps using social media to reach them. *True Catholic formation to couples getting married. *Formation to parents about parenthood, passing on the faith to their children and how. *Formation in human virtues that are the basis for living the faith well. *Formation for the elderly: their import role in life and in their families and in passing on values and faith We need to provide ongoing religious and spiritual formation to people: from their childhood till the end of their lives.</p> <p>I think it is very important the work we do with priests: *That they really understand the vocation and dedication that entails being a priest before the enter the seminary. *Training in personal relationship with Our Lord: importance of daily mental prayer; celebrating Mass every day; celebrating other sacraments, especially sacrament of penance. *Training in faith and pastoral issues. *Providing human support. I think sometimes priests are lonely. It may be a good idea to create social, priestly support groups to encourage each other.</p>
<p>To focus on formation and community by: * regrouping—acknowledging, learning from and moving forward in the face of the recent challenges facing our Church; * re-forming—regathering as a close, loving, strong, proud and loyal Catholic community; * formation—working to ensure that all Catholics of every age and regardless of where they are at in their journey with Christ are given every available opportunity to be fully and properly formed in their faith (i.e. having a solid understanding of what we believe as Catholics and why we believe it).</p>
<p>To rise above recent scandals dogging the Church, find what remains of our belief, and get back to the essence and core of our faith.</p>
<p>"To hear the cry of the earth and hear the cry of the poor."</p>
<p>God is asking us to do something about the clericalism and subsequent abuse arising from this misuse of power. He is asking us to remember and come to know Jesus and to live as He did.</p>
<p>-To respond to the Pope's call of accepting refugees.</p> <p>-To be a light in the culture of life, standing up for the rights of the unborn and giving support to mothers, the elderly and infirm so that we may always love and choose life.</p> <p>-To educate our Church. Firm communication of Church teachings on prevalent issues such as same sex attraction, why only males are called to be priests, transgender issues etc. through the lens of Theology of the Body. This is a BEAUTIFUL document and really explains the richness of the Catholic perspective on these issues.</p> <p>-Teaching people how to pray—Experts in the art of prayer need to teach regular church-goers how to pray. It sounds simple, but so many people have no idea how to pray and are even scared of praying.</p> <p>-Stick to our Church ideals, dogma and teachings but present them in a fresh way so that people will understand the fullness of the truth and the richness of the Catholic faith.</p> <p>-Establishing communities and support networks for married couples, young families and education for how they can raise their children in the faith.</p> <p>-Publicity of the Divine Will (Luisa Piccarreta).</p> <p>-Focus on practical ways to live out God's will in everyday life. In our work, in our family life.</p> <p>-Education on how we can minister to our friends and family in everyday situations.</p>

God is asking the hierarchy of the Australian Catholic Church to think outside the square and to plan for future generations of Australian Catholics. In its current form the Catholic Church in Australia is unsustainable and there will be no one in the churches in less than 20 years' time. Traditions and man-made "rules" need to be done away with or at least revised for society in the 21st century. e.g. contraception, divorcees, gay community, female priests and deacons, married priests etc.

God is asking us to: Remember the beginnings of our Church. To live the Gospel. To be a true disciple of Jesus. To help those that cannot help themselves. Remember that Jesus spoke to his followers in parables so they could understand the word of God. Remember that Jesus did not discriminate he valued and loved everyone equally. Remember that when Jesus died on the cross that the temple veil was torn by God so that there was no need for sacrifice and the way to seek forgiveness was through Jesus himself not from any man. That God created us in his image and gave us a mind to think and create. That we accept everyone as God's creation regardless of their gender, race or sexual orientation. That we listen to our youth who are the future of our Church. That we realise that what we have today is not working our numbers are dwindling however other churches' numbers are rising. That our clergy break open the word to their flocks like Jesus did using the language of the day. That our clergy receive regular formation so they understand their community. Remember that it was a woman that announced the joyous news of Jesus' resurrection at Easter.

God wants the Catholic Church to create a more welcoming accepting and non-judgmental environment in parish communities. God wants parish communities to have vibrant music in Mass and for priests to work hard to present engaging homilies.

To listen and act upon the voices/concerns of all Australian Catholics both men and women in and out of the Church. A greater /deeper understanding of the gospels as relevant to today's world—start connecting through the media of the age—social media, and not just a focus on the youth but all ages particularly the 30-60 years the most disenfranchised groups. The bishops must start listening to the voices of the laity and start acting upon the needs of the community and not in secret. For the development of connected caring communities enriching all parts of Catholic life. Get away from the mindset of a one hour Mass obligation on Sundays only. Stop the patriarchal practices of so many priests and allow the lay ministers to get involved and bring about relevant changes. Laity need to be engaged and involved in key decisions making in communities. The laity need to be treated as the educated adults we are and local churches need to start providing e.g. Men's breakfast groups etc. that are relevant to the needs of the particular community. Provide more than just Mass on Sunday. In our world Christians/Catholics need ongoing support and sustenance.

I think God is calling the Church to be more relevant to modern life. I don't think he ever wanted us to have the giant, formal structure which now exists. We need far less clericalism. Priests, young and old, cannot be allowed to believe they can get respect just because they are priests—they have to earn it. Abolish soutanes, which are now almost laughable and cartoon fodder. Prompt assistance, both psychological and monetary, to clerical abuse victims even if you have to sell Church property to fund it. Invite those who left to marry to return to the priesthood if they wish. Serious consideration of women priests and allow priests, both men and women, to marry. Train seminarians to have SHORT homilies relevant to current events bearing in mind young people have increasingly short attention spans.

I think we should be brave about our Catholic faith and what we believe in rather than downplay or hide our Catholic teachings. If we do ignore the Church's teachings and not talk freely or preach (or in the case of priests) about them, the next generation will be ignorant in the faith. This is a Church who has its doctrines publicly listed in the most recent updated Catechism. The Church, in its avoidance of controversy and actions, should not underplay the authority of the Catechism. I will give one fairly typical example. We had a visiting priest preaching here last Sunday. He, in a gentle way, clearly mentioned abortion and that it was wrong. One parishioner complained and

the parish priest is now investigating. One can't mention disapproving opinions about abortion without getting severe disapproval from some quarters within the Church. I am not involved in any protest movement. I am disquieted by the way many Catholics (Western World) no longer hold onto many of the stated fundamental doctrines of the Church. Some priests are often afraid to acknowledge them.... or they don't actually believe them themselves. (I must say this does not apply to our local parish or neighbouring parishes but it has to be mentioned). I don't think that the Church will make any progress or will have any future in Australia if it is 'wishy washy' about its own beliefs. God help us, Amen.

God is asking us to evangelise. We could start in our Catholic schools by evangelising our teachers because without good practicing Catholic teachers the faith cannot be taught to our children. Catholic children are the future of our Church but so many are leaving Catholic schools without knowing the Faith. The parents need to be helped with knowing the faith as many of them are not practicing. We need vibrant parish schools with good liturgy and hymns. I would prefer no hymns to some of the "hymns" sung at Holy Mass. I think God is asking us to reach out to our parish communities with good Catholic education that will bring people back to our Church.

To centre our lives around Christ. How we should help younger people to grow in the love of Christ. Keyword is LOVE for Our Lord. Not about the trivial things such as structures, women priest, same sex marriages...

To inspire each other to listen to and respond to the Good News; as leaders, to be attentive to the guidance of the Holy Spirit by listening to our community; to create real connections in our community so that people feel they are part of a Church that is relevant and meaningful; to look at the way different cultural groups (Brazilian, Spanish, Filipino) create community, celebrate joyfully and wholeheartedly and build on their example; to not get so stuck in doing everything 'correctly'—have some creativity and openness to a new ways of celebrating and being together; for some of our priests to be less in charge and more within community; to accept that change is necessary and to try new ways of being community, celebrating, in leadership and to respond to the times; listen to the challenges our priests are facing and provide care for them as people; provide better systems of support and care for our parishioners and new ways of making these happen; to look for different models of leadership and service within the Church; to discover the richness that intercultural experiences can offer within our own parish community; to find ways to know and listen to the Gospel. A word summary of our responses—inclusivity, outreach; harness our gifts, find out what is special about our community and inspire their use; connections (maintain); unite our community for Christ; lead our community in finding a unique way to spread Christ's word; be courageous in leadership; listen carefully and prayerfully to the voice of our parish; listen to the Spirit; listen to concerns and good in our parish; listen to the forgotten; more talk about vocations to the priesthood; know Jesus better so that we have better, mature understanding and acceptance of all; lead our community in a way that brings us closer to Him; see the sacred, find ways to acknowledge the joy of life; be able to accept change; make worshipping easier; relevant; meaningful; share our personal stories in Mass; God is asking us to welcome all; Church needs to identify with the youth so we WILL have a future; support the participation of the young in our Church; encourage the youth; be more attentive to immigrants and new arrivals to our parish as a PPC.

Transparency: The clergy needs to come forward and admit their wrong doings or hiding the truth in order to protect themselves or the Church. Convicted priests should be stripped of any roles and privileges. Processes should be presented in public, like finding a bishop for [-] takes forever—why? Equality: Men and women should be treated all in the same way irrespective of their sexual preferences, whether they have been married before or not. If we are serious about equality we cannot accept male dominance in the Church. The Australian Church needs to lead the way to have female priests and bishops. The Australian Church needs to be led by people with a sense for community, not careerists like Archbishop [-]. Bishops, archbishops and cardinals should step down after 5-10 years in order to become humble again and get down to earth i.e.

parish. Continuity: parish priests are rotating at a high speed. That has been useful to cover up misdoings. Going forward having long term commitments will build a stronger relationship and allows to have ownership and responsibility for changes. Engaging the youth: parishes and Catholic schools need to work together to build the faith of young children. Engaging teens can only happen when the Church changes and build credibility.

The revelation of sexual abuse within the Church has been very painful but corresponds with my experience of Catholic schools in the 90s, not in experience of sexual abuse, but of the hardness I encountered amongst some bishops and teachers, when my husband and I tried to protest about what was being taught to our children, which was not the truth. How much people suffer when we withhold the truth from them! How much sin they fall into! I think the Holy Spirit has paved the way for us to return humbly with fidelity and love to the teachings of Christ, and not to water down His teachings. Our Lord was kind but firm, compassionate to the sinner, and I think He is asking that of us—to teach the truth with love, gentleness, and understanding as He did to the woman caught in adultery "Neither do I condemn you" ... and to whom He also said "Go and sin no more". To those who might say that being loving means we accept immoral ways of life, I think the Holy Spirit wants us to be clear headed and loving and forgiving but to help people out of the slavery of sin. I think the Holy Spirit wants the Catholic Church in Australia to be brave because He wants us to help many people to the truth and doesn't want us at the end of lives to hear that justified reproach of the man on the stretcher bed who was ignored by the people around him who did not help him to be cured, to reach "the waters when they moved".

A renewal in the faith with a re-catechesis from the young to the old. An understanding of orthodoxy of the faith handed down from Christ to Peter and unto us. This catechesis could begin with the Mass given that this is the most common sacrament that is accessed by all. We need to understand that the Mass is a sacrifice and sacrament, the source and summit of the Christian life. Another important area of Catechesis should be of the importance of availing to the sacrament of reconciliation. The further we as a Church are from this sacrament, the further we are away from renewal. "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land"—2 Chron 7:14. It would be useful to consider a Year of the Eucharist and Reconciliation. We have to rediscover the universal call to holiness from the documents of the Vatican Council II and the exhortations for St JP II. We need to rediscover how our faith and everyday life are one and the same. The need to understand, develop and promote and true sacrament of marriage. The Church is made up of the domestic Church, the family. The family unit is under horrendous attack. We must re-catechize the lay faithful of the true beauty of the marriage and ponder on the life of the Holy Family.

That we be faithful to his Church and pray for all the members of the Church, particularly the bishops and priests.

That we be better Catholics, read the Gospels, know the Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, especially about the sacraments and Holy Mass, receive the sacraments and do vocal and mental prayer, and that we offer to God well-done work.

I believe the Lord wants us to really know our faith so we can pass it on confidently to others. I believe catechesis at a family, parish and school, university level is of vital importance.

COMMUNITY

- Make Christianity more meaningful for the youth and young families.
- Focus on actions and behaviours (e.g. Social Justice).
- Make the Mass the focus of the community.
- Build community around the Church so we can pass the baton to the next generation to be role models.
- Build communities which are independent of political views, but which are still relevant for young adults.

INCLUSIVITY

-Create a more inclusive Church put more women in positions of power in the Church.

ADDRESSING THE PAST

-Learn from past mistakes through Royal Commission findings.

-Focus on engagement in the schools rather than doctrine.

-Consider allowing priests to get married.

RELEVANCE

-To be stronger in our faith and to hear his voice and go to the light I suppose.

-I have no idea any more. I guess he (God) speaks to others who listen to his calling. I haven't got a clue in the world.

God wants us to be together to build a strong faith.

SOCIAL CHANGE

-To allow women to be priests.

-To continue to adapt with modern thinking regarding social issues i.e. role of women, priest marriage, gay marriage, gay teachers.

-To allow priests to marry.

-To combat secularism.

COMMUNITY

-To take initiative in Social Justice work as a community, especially in schools to encourage more welcoming events to bring people back into the Church.

-To unite as a group.

-To unite together, to put our differences aside and get along peacefully.

YOUTH

-To further encourage the youth of today to take on responsibility and leadership in local parishes.

-To educate the youth.

-To require more presence of religion in (school) curriculum.

-To stay grounded and 'real' despite increases in superficiality.

OTHER

-To address child abuse further.

-To place greater emphasis on evangelical pursuits. Particularly being open to social scenarios involving youth which too often becomes a taboo subject.

-To focus lesson doctrine, larger focus on just loving God.

To the council members: May the Almighty God bless you, may the Holy Spirit overshadow you with wisdom and discernment, and may the Passion of Christ give you strength to fortitude to fulfil His most loving Will: We would like to submit you our prayers for the new evangelization of Australia. The faithful need the availability of the sacraments in our busy lives. DAILY WEEKDAY MASSES: In particular the Holy Mass and the Eucharist. For the working faithful, to be able to access this most important sacrament, the churches need to be able to provide weekday Masses at staggered times, (not only at 9 or 9:30am). The faithful need early morning Masses (for example) at 6:30am before heading off to work. If the dioceses can arrange geographically varying times (possibly even including evening times as well), more faithful would be able to access this most important sacrament. This will ensure that the younger generation of our universal Church will be able to access the Blessed Eucharist. And in time, more faithful will grow in our Catholic Church by simply making more Masses available. Masses on Mondays should also be made available. (Mothers and fathers do not get a holiday from their duties raising a family). We pray that our bishops will see the need for daily Masses to the lay faithful and make more accessible daily Masses. We thank the Council for hearing our plea. Yours in Christ, Dr [-] and Mrs [-]

The faithful need the availability of the sacraments in our busy lives. AVAILABILITY OF CONFESSION/SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: The faithful need the availability of the sacrament of reconciliation at more frequent times so that the lay faithful can access it more readily. Examples:

- Confession available DURING Mass (in the parishes where there are more than one priest) this will make it easier for the faithful to take the opportunity to be invited and partake of this very important sacrament.
- Confession available BEFORE and AFTER Mass (in country parishes where less priests available).
- Confession available NOT ONLY on Saturdays.
- Emergency sacrament availability. Our priests are working hard, but we need them to be working smarter. With good organisation, more lay faithful may be reached.

REVERENCE DURING MASS AND ESPECIALLY AT THE CONSECRATION: All too often us faithful either do not understand the importance of the Mass or go regularly to Mass and tend to forget WHY we are at Mass. (It is easy to become distracted at Mass). REVERENCE expressed by the priest and the altar servers is of utmost importance as this will then propagate to the congregation. It is all too easy to become distracted at Mass if the focus is not kept on the importance of the celebration. We would like to encourage an increased REVERENCE at Mass in varying ways:

- REVERENCE expressed by the priest in GENUFLECTION, in acknowledging the BLESSED SACRAMENT in the Tabernacle with appropriate focus and time spent during the proceedings at Mass (such as in silent prayer when kissing the altar, those few seconds in recollection during the liturgy etc.).
- The Highlight of the MASS—THE CONSECRATION—spending sufficient time DURING the consecration (to allow the faithful to RAISE THEIR PRAYERS in union with the Blessed sacrament to Heaven)—maybe pause for 10 seconds during the consecration—Very few priests tend to practice this form of REVERENCE but it can be so beneficial in our prayers. If the faithful understand the Consecration, we would all focus more intently at this time (that is why the Church uses the ringing of the bells at this time—to focus our thoughts back to the liturgy if they have strayed)
- There is also a great need to explain to the lay faithful about the TRUE PRESENCE in the Tabernacle. If we understand it, we will practice silence and prayerful recollection in the Church.

COURSES AND HELP TO BECOME A BETTER FATHER/MOTHER/HUSBAND/WIFE AND HOW TO RUN A FAMILY—There is very little available help to Married Couples starting or raising a family. Following the sacrament of matrimony, the newlywed couple is out alone in the secular world. Just like persons in the work force have the availability to further educate themselves in their respective fields of work, there is a great need for INSTRUCTION IN MARRIED LIFE for young as well as mature couples, through seminars and workshops (supporting the nuclear family). Example FEA (Family Education Australia already has some courses like these running). Sharing with all ages the STRUGGLES of a being a Catholic faithful. The instruction needed can be composed of both didactic lectures and seminars, as well as interactive problem solving and sharing of older couples with younger ones, ideas which have worked for them.

- Ongoing instruction after the RCIA program.
- Regular formation in our Catholic faith

VENERATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IN THE CHURCHES—The tradition of Veneration of the Blessed sacrament has been a long tradition in the Catholic culture, but is not used as much these days. We should encourage this act of piety to be made available and inspire especially the young (but also the mature) to avail themselves to this special time of REVERENCE and PRAYER. In places where this sacred custom has been used, it is well known to BRING VOCATIONS to the religious life. In this time of reduced vocations in Australia, this would be “the Noah’s Ark” that is so needed in our parishes. (The statistics suggest that 90% of vocations come from the family). The places where it is available, it seems to be often only some few devoted Catholics, which are advertising it. It would be of benefit for the priest to explain and continually persist in advertising it to the congregation at Sunday Mass. Example: expose the Blessed sacrament at the end of the

SUNDAY evening Mass (often frequented by the young) and some of the parishioners may remain behind in silent prayer and reflection after Mass. If this custom was going to be used at the end of Mass, the priest would have to explain the need for quiet reflection within the Church and allow the congregation to move outside to talk with other parishioners so as to keep the silence within the Church.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING and WELCOME OF YOUNG FAMILIES TO MASS—Raising a family today can be a stressful period. The Church should promote and reinforce the teaching of love between married couples being OPEN TO LIFE; but also make available information on the various forms of Natural Family Planning (examples: Daysy wheel, Creighton Method, other forms of fertility monitoring). List these in the Church Bulletin—Set up website with help to families in the use of these—and support the couples that wish to space and plan their family. Also explain the Church's teaching on family planning so that couples do not resort to the use of these alone, but embrace children with love (as per their wedding vows). Support the bringing of children to Mass and encouraging a spirit of community in the parish which encourages mothers/fathers to bring their (sometimes not so quiet) little children without the stress of thinking they are disturbing the congregation.

PRIEST DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES—Our diocesan priests are often overwhelmed and busy with duties other than pertaining to their ordained tasks. That is, running of schools and parish offices, running their household etc. The main task of the priest is a pastor to the people in the parish, providing the SACRAMENTAL and SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE to the lay faithful. The other tasks should be delegated and taken up by the parishioners so as to free up the priest to his spiritual duties. Providing support for our priests in parishes both in a physical way (cleaning/cooking/washing), as well as practical running of the parish (finances, organisation of activities etc.) will free up our priests and make themselves available for the sacraments. This will also encourage the building of community spirit. During periods of diocesan retreats for the priests, these should be divided in such a way as to make some priests still available to say Mass in the parishes without disturbing the routine of the sacraments, and hence the lay faithful can still be able to attend Mass and the sacraments. (Compare this to a company—they don't close down business for the purpose of running team building workshops for their employees or executive staff; neither do parents go on retreat and leave their little ones alone at home).

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MORE CATHOLIC—How can we make our Catholic Schools more Catholic?

Examples:

- Morning offering and prayers
- Grace before meals
- Angelus
- This can be apostolic to teachers that are not Catholic or practicing
- Ensure RE teachers have good programs which are sound and interactive (multimedia)—this will require good solid programs.
- Make confession available to children daily
- Instil in them REVERENCE to the Blessed sacrament. The short few years that these children spend in the Catholic Schools, may be the only exposure they have to the Catholic faith, as often the parents may not practice or take them to Church on Sundays. Hence, the teaching should be well structured and informative; as this is the future generation of the Church, and we will reap (tomorrow) the Fruits of our labour (today). Priests should be available for the instruction (see a previous submission on Duties of a diocesan priest), wear the priestly habit (which the children will remember in times to come).

To listen and be guided by the Holy Spirit. To encourage all Catholics to have a personal relationship with Jesus, to talk about what this looks like. To witness to the power of the Holy

Spirit to transform lives. To be counter cultural in the way the Church embraces all whilst proclaiming the gospel. To be a light in the darkness where individuality and self-gratification have become the norm. To be a joy filled Church that draws people to it.

God asks of us what He has always asked of us, fidelity to Apostolic Tradition. The Gospels tell us: John 14:15-21 Revised Standard Version (RSV) 15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor, to be with you for ever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you. Also in Matthew 28:18-20 (RSV) 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." We are called to follow Christ in the Church He established, the Catholic Church, and call others in an Apostolic outreach to join for the necessity of their own salvation. We are to seek holiness of life, to be closer to God. As from the Sermon on the Mount, Christ calls us to "be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt 5:48) We should not seek worldly approval. We must reject the call for married priests, female deacons, a 'democratised Church' that smashes the order of parishioner—priest—bishop. There should be an increase in catechetical instruction, embracing the teachings of popes and councils prior to 1958, as well as learning from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd edition, 1997. In terms of the spiritual life, there needs to be a return to regular Eucharistic Adoration in parishes, coupled with Benediction. First Friday and Saturday devotions need to be promoted, as well as Eucharistic processions in public. The sacrament of Confession needs to be more widely promoted. Priests should never limit Confession to "by appointment" and a proper focus should be upon the avoidance of sin and supernatural remedies against it. Priests should be encouraged to introduce the Extraordinary Form of the Mass in parishes. The Church should not seek to partner with those groups, movements and societies that are antithetical to it, whether it be vanguards of the 'sexual revolution'—including the many and varied groups that sought and achieved the redefinition of marriage in Australia recently, as well as older esoteric societies that the Church has always stood against—the Lodge, and similar. Last it should not seek any religious cooperation with other faiths. There is a place for this in terms of public policy matters, but not religious worship. A correct explanation and upholding of the Church's teaching on conscience is necessary, especially in the public arena. I attach a recent published thesis I wrote to assist to this end. Last, seeking the view of the Catholic populace to discern the will of the Holy Spirit is presumptuous in the extreme, and is wrong. Popular opinion is not the voice of God.

I believe God ask to bring back Christ as the centre of our live through the followings: 1. Enhance formation for priest and parishioners through classes, talk, monthly recollections, retreat, courses etc. 2. Focus on the importance of sacraments especially Eucharist and sacrament of Confession. 3. Extensive Catechism in all Catholic schools. 4. Catholic faith formation for all Catholic School teachers and formation for parents, including parenting classes held in schools. 5. Daily Mass in Catholic School and made a chaplain easily accessible everyday offering not only sacrament but also one on one spiritual direction especially for older girls. 6. Strengthen family life by offering various family courses, family group focus, marriage enrichment program for parishioners. 7. Encourage apostolate by laity through friendship group.

In 1938, Archbishop Gilroy was so concerned about the homeless, often alcoholics, mostly men, that he provided Church property to address their needs. Matthew Talbot Hostel to be administered by St Vincent de Paul was established. In 2019 the homeless are not all men and alcoholics but more often they are victims of our changing economic times, men, women and families. As a Church what is Christ asking us to do? What sort of an image of Catholicism is being created? It is a pretence to think that St V d P as an organisation is taking care of or is capable of taking care of the needs of today's homeless. There are many good people within the Church, many of whom are young, who need leadership and the means to move into this space.

<p>I believe Our Lord is wanting us all to be encouraged more in our faith and Christian fellowship to become a more meaningful and true followers of Christ. The parishioners, the Church leaders and the Christian educators and personnel. We need to become more active in our faith and outreach to others in ways that are suitable to each individual and their stage of their lives. We need to learn forgiveness and compassion for the wrong doings of the Church leaders with regard to child abuse. We need to see direct action to remove obstacles for a clear truth and acknowledgement of the Church's mistakes. With this Plenary Council I would like to see much stronger action towards individuals to remove them from their positions that would interfere and endanger the Church's image for those wanting to follow Our Lord in a Catholic Christian Church.</p>
<p>God is asking us to come back to thousands of years old traditional teachings and scriptural inspirations, to navigate the challenges of this changing world. God is asking us to keep the family sacred and to invite others to the Church.</p>
<p>Reach out and connect to youth. Listen to what youth have to say. Build community both within faith and out. More community/connection. To accept everybody of different races. Accepting those from every background. Take action for the earth. Cutting back on things that are harming our environment. Think of others not money. To reach out to those on Nauru. Lead by example.</p>
<p>God is asking that we live together harmoniously and respect each other—men, women and especially children.</p>
<p>Let priests get married.</p>
<p>Plenary Council 2020 submission—1. One of the biggest issues facing the Church in Australia over the last fifty years has been the steadily declining number of people attending Mass regularly on Sundays. Some fifty per cent of Catholic families send their children to Catholic schools yet the immense majority do not attend Mass on Sundays. They have good will but for a variety of reasons do not see the need to attend Mass. Without going into the multiple causes of this problem it is urgent that the Church takes seriously the recent Pope's call for evangelisation. There are numerous programs for evangelisation already in existence that could be implemented, whether on the national, diocesan or parish level. Each diocese or parish should be encouraged to adopt some program of evangelisation in an effort to build up the number of people attending Mass, aiming especially at those non-practising Catholics who send their children to Catholic schools but also at the many unchurched people who are seeking what the Church offers. 2. One of the reasons why so many people drop out of active life in the Church is their lack of understanding of the basic truths of the Catholic faith. Many simply do not have a proper understanding of who Jesus Christ is or a personal relationship with him, they do not know what the Mass is and why it is so important for the Christian life, they do not know many of the basic truths about morality or why the sacrament of penance is so valuable when they have sinned, etc. To this end a number of measures could be implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Catholic schools should have a solid text for use at all levels, such as To Know, Worship and Love. —Teachers of religion should be accredited for their task and their training should include study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. —Wherever possible, teachers of religion should be practising Catholics who know and love their faith, and where such teachers exist they should be allowed wherever possible to be full-time RE teachers. —Since parishes have contact with a small minority of Catholics whereas Catholic schools have a much larger number, persons could be employed in the schools to liaise with parents with the aim of getting them more involved in the life of the parish. —Dioceses could draw up a list of topics for Sunday homilies in a three-year cycle which would cover the basic points of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. This has been done in at least one Australian diocese and it is recommended by the Vatican. The Congregation for Divine Worship's 2015 Homiletic Directory has a complete list of references to the Catechism for all the Sundays and major feast days of the year.

—Parishes should run adult faith formation programs using such programs as Catholicism, Journey into Truth and Symbolon.
Plenary Council Submission. I believe God is asking us in Australia at this time to be very faithful to the teachings and example of Jesus Christ which he left us in the Church he founded on Peter in order to enable us to achieve salvation. These teachings emphasised love of God and love of neighbour as the most important of the Commandments. I think Pope Benedict expressed this well in his homily in Pilsudski Square, Warsaw, in 2006: "Love for Christ expresses itself in the will to harmonize our own life with the thoughts and sentiments of his Heart. This is achieved through interior union based on the grace of the sacraments, strengthened by continuous prayer, praise, thanksgiving and penance. We have to listen attentively to the inspirations that he evokes through his Word, through the people we meet, through the situations of daily life. To love him is to remain in dialogue with him, in order to know his will and to put it into effect promptly." Since the Protestant Reformation thousands of Christian churches have sprung up with various compromises on the original teachings of Christ. There is no longer in them any central teaching authority in that the primacy and infallibility of the Pope as the Vicar of Christ in matters of faith and morals was set aside. Hence, we have instead a huge multitude and variety of often contradictory personal interpretations and opinions as to what and how it is necessary to believe and act to follow Christ faithfully and to achieve eternal life with Him. In recent times this individualistic approach so prevalent in many aspects of our society has led many in the Christian community and even in the Catholic Church to support issues such as same-sex marriage which is also an implicit approval of same sex relations which is contrary to the teachings of Christ. Poor formation in the Faith and disunity among some clergy in following Church teaching has led to confusion and a culture of so-called "Cafeteria Catholicism" or "Catholic lite", where we pick and choose what we find convenient to believe and disregard those teachings we find in conflict with our lifestyle. The Catholic Church has a duty to pass on the Truth entrusted by Christ to His Apostles, to faithfully transmit the deposit of Faith. Other Christian churches have compromised with "modernity" on many core moral issues only to see their congregations shrink still further ...Contraception, abortion, IVF, embryonic stem cell experimentation as well as divorce and remarriage, same sex "marriage" all contravene the teachings of Christ but this is sadly not reflected in many Protestant congregations nor are the teachings of Christ on these issues clearly upheld by some Catholic priests and Religious either, leading to great confusion and a sense that "anything goes," if I'm ok with it. The concept of having an informed conscience is largely ignored.
He is asking the people of the World to rise up against the dis-functional bishop male dominated structure. He would like us to look at the messages Jesus left us. Does Jesus need to revisit to ensure we understand? Why don't we have confidence in all the very capable people within the Catholic Church to spread what Jesus has told us? The hierarchy of the Catholic Church are totally absorbed with their own importance and not interested in the opinions of the people who really count.
Maintain traditions and our stringent morality. Be accepting of change and be accepting of ALL people. Willing to adapt to modern lifestyles and values. Review/eliminate traditional roles—allow women to do the work of God / priests. Allow Church leaders to have families. Not lose sight of the important things in life—change of hierarchy so that it is more relatable to common Church goer / make the structure flatter. Have a more Hillsong-like approach. Make the Mass structure more joyful and interactive. Look into more Bible studies.
Stay strong, stay faithful to Christ's teaching, no compromise, be the lighthouse in the darkness of confusion, teach the Catholic faith in its fullness.
To show love, respect and accept all others irrespective of race, religion, sexuality. To respect the earth and all its resources. To ensure the vulnerable are safe and cared for. To look to sense of community. Teach our children well.
God is asking the same of us as He always has—to follow His Will. We do this through His Revelation in Scripture, Tradition and the Magisterium of the Church. If we get back to and obey

<p>God's law through His Church then the Church will flourish. We will do this by teaching and living our faith unapologetically in our atheistic and secularised world. We must above all pray (beginning with the best and most efficacious prayer, the Mass), educate ourselves on the Church's teachings, and live our lives in obedience to the Church. We must dedicate our whole lives to The Lord and live out His Will. We must pass this onto our children.</p>
<p>To foster a greater appreciation among both clergy and laity of the necessity and usefulness of priestly celibacy for the life of the Church. Among the challenges facing the Church in Australia during these first years of the 21st century is to face up to the pervasive sexual abuse of minors by Catholic clergy and laity that has occurred in the past 50 or 60 years. No less serious is the emerging fact of cover-up: a systematic attitude of keeping such abuse out of public knowledge, shielding the guilty party and giving little or no attention or pastoral care to victims. Many will keep asking themselves for a long time to come how anything like this could happen under the auspices of our leaders. And they will legitimately wonder if perhaps the traditional discipline of celibacy for priests in the Latin rite might not be an unwitting but contributing factor to such abuse. Undoubtedly they will even think that perhaps this is the very message of the Holy Spirit for us today (cf Rev 2:7). I do not think priestly celibacy is the problem, or contributes to the problem. In fact, I would like to use this submission to make the counter suggestion—that priestly celibacy, lived authentically as part of giving one's whole life to Christ, His Church and all souls, in all its purity and simplicity, in a spirit of renewal and conversion, will be one of the greatest spiritual antidotes against the sexual abuse of minors in the future. I think this is the true message that the Holy Spirit is trying to say to us at this critical junction, though it is not a new idea (https://www.mercatornet.com/above/view/celibacy-is-the-answer-to-abusive-priests-not-the-problem/22213). It is one we need now, more than ever.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To become more receptive to God's will for us. -To grow in love of God, and transmit this love naturally to our family and friends. -To know Christ personally and learn from experts in the art of prayer. -To have confidence in our individual example for following Christ in our day to day lives, especially in regard to sexual morality; through our behaviour, the way we dress, understanding with others. -To promote forming the youth by strong convictions of truth and love; the richness of the Catholic faith, it's sacraments, tradition rather than ideas that encourage sentimentalism bringing about enthusiasm that quickly fades. -To invest more into improving the doctrine of Catholic education as well as good teachers who genuinely love and live the faith in its fullness.
<p>Personal relationship with Him through communion in his Church. Also a greater understanding of what is prayer and how to do it. Also a greater involvement in doctrinal and personal formation so people can better understand their place in the Church, the world and the personal responsibility of the Christian in society.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to be saints. There is no higher priority in life than to be close to God and live a holy life.</p>
<p>To remain faithful to the Magisterium and orthodox Catholicism. Promote vocations to the priesthood and Religious life more actively. Promote orthodox Catechesis in schools. Promote the development of character and virtue in family life, giving parents their inalienable right as the primary educators of their children. Priests to give strong homilies and not be afraid to address issues like abortion, euthanasia, same sex marriage from the doctrinal perspective. Promote Eucharistic adoration. Use Social Media to the best advantage to promote Church teaching and evangelisation. Reach out to families more. Continue to address the issues around sexual abuse rigorously. Promote openness to life on the part of married couples.</p> <p>To remain faithful to the Magisterium. Promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Promote Eucharistic Adoration. Promote the building up of the family as the bedrock of society—</p>

<p>an “old fashioned” concept—the family that prays together stays together is still very relevant. The family is where vocations are nurtured. Parents as the first educators of their children to develop character and virtue in their children. Couples to be more open to life. Promote Natural Family Planning as it is natural, not injurious to health and builds deep bond between each couple. Promote the wonderful benefits of the Rosary. Promote proper catechesis in schools. Use Social Media to build up the Church. Continue to address the issue of sexual abuse. noting the good that has happened since protocols were put in place. Promote the sacrament of Reconciliation.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to be more active in living and sharing His teachings to others. And we do these by : (1) actively seeking and receiving education and training about our faith through the Church; (2) the clergy receive regular spiritual formation and training themselves; (3) the clergy and duly trained faithful provides education to the people including the children during Mass, in school, small group in local Church; (4) The Church hierarchy actively and without fear preach and provide timely and clear guidance to the faithful in matters of faith and morals. This will enable the faithful to make an informed decision whether it is relating to their daily life or to an issue with wider impact.</p>
<p>God is our Creator. Therefore we are all made in The Image and likeness of God.</p>
<p>After some prayer and reflection we feel that In Australia God is asking us firstly to have a deeper knowledge of our Catholic faith. Secondly, to reach out to Catholics who are distanced from the Church.</p>
<p>I do not feel I am in a position to know what God is asking of Australia during these times. As for what he asks of me is to be a good and faithful servant, striving for perfection, following his commandments spreading peace, hope and love.</p>
<p>I believe that, in this time where God's will is being contravened by issues such as abortion, euthanasia and same-sex marriage, God fervently desires for Australia to return to His Way and correct these evils which plague our society. I believe that God wishes for His One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church to call her members, many of whom have strayed from the fullness of her teaching, back to God's True Way, so that the Catholics can play their part in restoring God's way to our land.</p>
<p>Be patient and kind and appreciative of all life.</p>
<p>To pray more, to compromise more with our Church and increase our faith. As Pope said, we have to go to the peripheries that the major are around us.</p>
<p>The people of [-] of parish would like: Plenary Council Feedback [-] parish Youth Overall [-] parish would like the Church to: Engage, reach out and make the youth feel welcomed. Educate the young in the teachings of the Church. Encourage young people to come to back to the Church. More at schools to come to Church. Deformalize Mass so youth will come more for teenagers. Make 5 o'clock Saturday children's Mass with a scripture groups. Make the Mass more relevant to the youth—different ways to celebrate the Mass. Bring back the CYO—Social element. Listen to the youth. Make the Church Relevant. Encourage parents to bring their children to Church. Abuse. Shame of the members of the Church in regard to sexual abuse. Accountability and strong leadership from clergy. Sincere Apology for the Abuse and cover up. Re-establishment of Moral Authority. Constructive Change. Upholding of the Law. Learn from contemporary events. Education and prevention. Address damage to victims and support/ help victims of abuse. Restore confidence in the Church Clergy. Allow women to be priests. Allow marriage of priests. Remove celibacy. Involve the Laity in the Leadership of the Church. Strong leadership from leaders of the Church. More opportunities for Lay people. Allow married Deacons to help with the priest shortage. Show leadership and offer professional help. Support and help for priests. Social Justice—As Catholics we should be thinking of others—refugees. Welcoming to others and compassion. Get back the example of Jesus in serving the poor, sick, damaged, mental health. Workers and stronger advocates of Social Justice. Use social Media for Social Justice. Inclusivity. Acceptance of others—LGBTQI. Divorced people, less divisiveness. Include gay couples and allow marriage. Don't deny communion to divorce people. More inclusive to all—race, gender, culture,</p>

<p>socio-economic group. Change our Mindset. Continue the reforms of Vatican II. Matters of Contraception. Allow Divorce couples to remarry and be accepted in the Church. Non-Judgemental—accept people from all walks of life. Reach out to lapsed Catholics and try and make change to bring them back. Liturgy—Update the language of the Liturgy, more inclusive of Australia Music that is upbeat/ more silence. Recognise the importance prayer. Re-branding of the Church. Promoting the goodness of the Church. Look at the Hillsong and Pentecostal churches. We evangelise but what we do next not what we have done in the past. Modernise the Church sacraments. Review ages of sacraments for children. Encourage more confessions and communion.</p>
<p>I believe God is asking us to find new, innovative ways to seek Him, to Find Him and to Love Him.</p>
<p>* Consider the possible cause of our shameful child abuse. TREAT the symptom. REMOVE Celibacy. *Look at our dictatorial past. Remove its presence so that we can focus on our faith journey. *Recognise that our "MAN-Made" rules are just that, and do not come from an all-inclusive and loving God but one of division and exclusion.</p>
<p>That we must: HARMONISE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS IIN AUSTRALIA—Let us all work together to harmonise relationships with the First Australians and, perhaps in parallel, also work with other ethnic/racial groups and other groups such as Disabled Australians, LGBTQI and others with the aim of producing a really harmonised Australia by a certain date. For draft purposes I'm suggesting ten years with yearly milestones along the way. Some Aboriginal leaders are critical of the Australian Government's attempts to solve problems related to the Indigenous Australians. They make statements such as "we don't want to be told what is best for Indigenous people" and I'd like to see a process set up with the target of harmonising relationships with the Indigenous people whereby they do most of the work and come up with recommendations as to what they believe needs to be done and from which can worked out a series of goals and then a schedule and set of priorities to help achieve those goals. This is a Massive task but, just as a long journey starts with the first step; it is time that we took the first step to solve this problem. I know the Catholic Church does a lot of work in this area as do other churches and organisations and I am not suggesting that these be taken over by the Government but, perhaps there is scope for the Commonwealth Government to play an over-arching role in bringing all individual initiatives together in order to meet a yet to be defined series of goals over an agreed period, say ten years. Whatever it costs, whatever resources are needed, let us throw them at the project because it is so important that we do our best to make our Indigenous people and other minorities feel as equal as everyone else. Aboriginal leaders could set up an examining body sort of like a Royal Commission to examine the needs and wishes of all Indigenous people by talking to individuals and groups, requesting submissions, recording them, analysing them and using this data as a basis for producing a series of recommendations for goals, short and long term, along with a modus operandi for achieving those goals. All of this will, hopefully, produce a positive mindset so that, in the future, the Aboriginal leaders can speak positively about progress and thus encourage all Australians to get on board to help do whatever is necessary to achieve the main goal. Instead of complaining about what the Government is not doing, one could be positively reporting on what the Australian people, including the Indigenous population and the various governments are actually achieving, what obstacles have been encountered and what action, perhaps modified, is recommended for the future. We, in the Catholic Church could play a very important part in working with the Aboriginal community to produce a viable plan of attack and change the attitudes of all Australians from being somewhat negative to overwhelmingly positive.</p>
<p>I think that a principal issue is Christian unity. While there are interfaith and other councils and some local initiatives particularly in South Australia are very good, there is little leadership in making Christian unity a high priority. In Paul's interpretation, we need to be the body of Christ.</p>
<p>I believe that God is asking that we be more responsive to contemporary social and environmental issues: Climate Change, or belief in endless economic growth that is causing endless</p>

environmental damage, the need for a fairer distribution of the benefits of labour, the provision of affordable housing, the various forms of 'slave labour', the dreadful treatment of asylum seekers in Australia, the lack of Catholic witnessing on these issues. In summary, we have not responded sufficiently positively to the message of Pope Francis in the form of *Laudato Si'*, and the leadership provided by previous popes.

I think God is asking us to convert again and turn to him. I think He is asking us to turn away from sin and specifically from the forms of sin most prevalent in our society. In the first place, I think he is asking us to turn away from an individualism which poisons the action of divine charity. I think he is asking us to turn away from a materialism which clouds what ought to be our true hope. I think he is also asking us to turn away from a subjectivism which makes us afraid to talk about the truths of the faith.

I think God is asking us now:

- * to make the Church what He intended it to be—with less "pomp";
- * for there to be NO clericalism—for leaders to be NOT power hungry men, but rather to be servants of the Church, the followers of Christ;
- * for there to be TRANSPARENCY and ACCOUNTABILITY of the clergy to the laity on all matters, especially to have systems in place to protect our children from abuse and sexual abuse;
- * to have CONSULTATION and GOOD COMMUNICATION from the clergy with the laity;
- * for RESPECT and EMPOWERMENT of women in the Church and a formal pathway for women's voices and unique perspectives to be heard in the Catholic Church;
- * for a new INCLUSIVE model of Church governance—inclusive of all laity, women and youth;
- * for an ecumenical Church.

I believe in some Catholic schools Children are not learning about the sacredness of the Mass. Churches are more like community halls rather than sacred places. I would like to see tabernacles returned to the centre of the church. Jesus said "when I am lifted up above the world I will draw all men to myself". I know this refers to His crucifixion but I also believe that if the Tabernacle is raised in our churches with a great sense of honour, once more He will draw people to Himself. We have lost the sense of wonder and mystery. Homilies need to be relevant. Music really affects the youth and it would be so good to get the youth involved rather than older people.

I feel God is asking for all of us to reflect more, to ask more, to be awakened to what is happening around us. With all the new technological advancements in communication, People are becoming overloaded with information, so much so that the truth is becoming hidden. People are finding it harder to find God as his message is being lost. Even though people so desperately seek the truth and are wanting a closer relationship with God, we as a nation are spending more time on doing without understanding what and why we do the things we do. So we need to educate children, teenagers, parents, families in very practical ways. In order for this to take place the following must happen: Religious education teachers should be formed in the Catholic faith. The children should be educated in communication in marriage and parenting skills. There should be more formation groups within the churches for children/teens/young adults. Parents as part of the Catholic schools should have programs for formation as part of the school. The teachers invest so much of their time on the children, parents should be actively involved to, if parents find it hard to attend, there should be encouragement and help set up to help them attend. All priests to receive continuing formation and regular assessments and spiritual direction in order for parishioners to receive the true words. Priests should be taught public speaking skills to deliver homilies in engaging ways and in a shorter time especially for families attending the Church with very young children. There should also be pre and post Marriage formation, as I feel today many couples struggle with permanence, with promises, with following through. They need to truly understand the vows they are going to take or have taken. Each couple should have mentor couples. In the Church it would be great to have leaflets [on] the role of the parish priest in simple format. What you can expect from them and ask of them.

Surely God is asking us to come out of the dark ages and be a modern vibrant Church that is relevant to the 21st century. As the scourge of paedophilia, a worldwide epidemic is making it shameful and embarrassing to be a Catholic we need to address the causes of the problem and face a few facts. We need to allow priests to live a normal married life. We need to have a better balance between the roles of women and men in the Church. We need to rid ourselves of robes and outmoded rules and rituals and be an inspiring, welcoming, inclusive Church.
In June 2018 the [-] parish held a Forum on Child Protection and the Child Sexual Abuse Crisis within the Church and a subsequent follow up meeting. Over 100 people attended. There was a general consensus that the Plenary Council and the bishops must take very seriously the recommendations of the Royal Commission and implement them in full. Attach 1. Article from [-] News, Attach 2. Letter to Bishop [-].
Catholics need more formation in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, through informative Sunday homilies, additional catechism classes offered through the parish. The Catechism is such a wonderful, rich source to fuel and enliven our Faith, we need more knowledge of it. The aim is to love Jesus and God our Father more, we can't love well, what we don't know well, This formation is a wonderful way to know God better.
I think God is asking the laity to help make significant changes to our Church given the findings of the Royal Commission and the recommendations made. Whilst I think the Church is making constructive changes to ensure that abuse does not occur now, I feel that it has failed to properly apologise to victims and to the broader community for what it did in the past—both those that perpetrated crimes and those that were complicit or covered them up. There needs to be less focus on mercy and forgiveness—that will be God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. As human beings that have been given reason and a voice, we must use this to make sure that those responsible in the Church actually "take" full responsibility for their actions and engage in some penance and atonement for them. Those clergy that have not already come forward to confess should do so. The Church should provide all known information to the police immediately. Clergy that have confessed should plead guilty and take responsibility and not drag victims through the Courts. If they can confess in the sacrament of reconciliation, they can confess to their fellow men and women under law. The good clergy that have done nothing wrong need to change the system from "within". My suggestion is that they seriously consider a campaign to be taken to the Holy Father that the Catholic Church consider divesting itself of the "treasures and artworks" of the Vatican and use those funds to set up a worldwide fund for proper compensation for victims and families. For those victims that have taken their own lives, then the funds should be put aside for good works of mercy in their name (if families agree) or anonymously if they do not. The Catholic Church needs to "ask" forgiveness of all victims, secondary victims such as their families and tertiary victims which is all of the people of God and importantly the people that are "not of God"—those that do not believe, those that have not heard and may never believe. So much damage has been done and so many people I personally know have walked away from the Church—I only hope and pray that they do not walk away from God—that should be our primary concern. The only way to convince those that have walked will be meaningful apology and actual change. If the Church in Australia simply continues on as usual, then not only will they have reduced congregations but they will also have reduced funds with which to do good work. Many in the Church today feel that the only way for the hierarchy to listen is to withhold contributions on the plate. This is a very sad state of affairs and I am very sad to report this—I know what good works the Church does for people and has always done. However the Church must realise in Australia before it is too late. Jesus always wondered what faith he would find on earth on his second coming. He also taught us to see, judge and act. He gave us these gifts—please use this Plenary Council wisely and listen.
To be united as a Church.
God is asking us to keep our eyes on Jesus and go out of our way to meet the people who are hurting and forgotten, in their own terms and their own space rather than in our own terms, in

our own Church spaces. God is asking us to live what we believe and therefore be consistent in our word and actions.
A new and audacious trust in the power of God's personal love and life. A persevering faith, tested through trial and suffering, believing in his faithfulness in everything and his mercy. A new and bright joy in the promises of God. A new commitment to the defence and protection of the value dignity of each human life, especially the smallest, the hurting and the dying. A re-commitment to uphold, support and foster holiness in family life. To repent of our sins, of the grudges we've held, the dark places we've hidden, of the secrets we've kept or the wounds we've let get worse; to repent and ask for His forgiveness and surrender ourselves into His merciful Hands. I think God is asking us to unite like never before, to gather in close, remember who we are as one family, although hurting and sinners, and let God's spirit unite us together in the unbreakable bond of faith and welcome God again into the Church in Australia.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God would be asking us to address the long-standing evil scourge of child abuse in our Church. We must address this both within the Church, from the highest level, right down to 'grassroots' and MOST UNEQUIVOCALLY publicly within the wider community. THIS NEEDS TO HAPPEN RIGHT NOW. • The seriousness of this issue, and the cover ups and inadequate response to the problem and the suffering it caused MUST be addressed URGENTLY and with humility, honesty and openness to change. The Catholic Church must demonstrate in no uncertain terms it is sorry and will not stand for this, and become a beacon for justice and fairness and doing the right thing. • As a Catholic it disturbs and upsets me that there is little but silence on the current events—when there should be an opportunity to open a dialogue amongst ourselves, and with the wider community. This needs to happen, and this needs to happen NOW, not only to address the problem, but to re-assure all the upstanding members of our community (who really, at the end of the day, the Church is nothing without) that they should NOT be rethinking their very belonging to the Catholic Church, as I, and many are currently experiencing. What are we ALL going to do to address the issues, make amends and allow the Church to survive and thrive into the future. I AM VERY CONCERNED AT THE IMPACT THE CHURCH'S ATTITUDE AND SILENCE WILL HAVE ON ITS MEMBERS, AND WHETHER THEY FEEL THAT THEY CAN, IN GOOD CONSCIENCE, REMAIN PART OF THE CHURCH. What is the Church going to do to address this? • What is the Church going to do to re-store its good name? We have a LOT of work to be able to do that... in fact, I wonder whether it is even possible. This needs to be addressed directly and urgently with the community. • We must look at democratising our Church. It is time for the Church to move with the times and acknowledge, and make change—that women must be given equal opportunity to participate and lead in our (your?) Church. Marriage should be permitted of the clergy. LGBTI members of our community must not experience discrimination or hate—we MUST ask ourselves what Jesus would do.
To be more faithful and live in a more Christian manner with more of the Christian morals and values.
More closely align domestic churches (the family) with the universal Church.
I think God is asking us to be a Church of service and hospitality. We must welcome anyone whom Jesus would have welcomed i.e. everyone. The Church is too busy turning away people from the divorced to the gay, from the questioning to the disenchanted. I think God wants us to be a Church of people, not one of hierarchy and supposition that some people are closer to God than others....if this is to be believed those closest to God are either paedophiles or cover up for them.
The majority of Australian Catholics are unchurched. Of those who attend regularly and communicate, very few attend the sacrament of reconciliation. I believe the Church needs to have a vigorous catechesis on the need for regular confession of sins in the sacrament of reconciliation.
(Q 1 and 2) (a) God is asking us to love one another; therefore the Church should consider finding a way of accepting parishioners back into the Church whose marriages have failed through no fault of their own. This would mean people could receive the sacraments of the Church (including Marriage again if they wish) and get on with their lives, how God would have liked them to in the

first place. I know this would take a lot of time and effort as each individual case would have to be individually assessed, but I believe it would bring a lot of people back to the Church especially those that long for the Church, but can't come back under the present rules. The Church needs to communicate a lot better the services they offer to people whose marriages are failing, and investigate if these services meet the needs of the Church in Australia in the 21st century. (Q 1 and 2) (b) With regard to our priests I am not worried if they are Male or Female, Unmarried or Married.

I would say God may be asking us to focus more on Vatican II's "Universal Call to Holiness" and how we can each best answer that call. While these last decades since Vatican II there has been much emphasis on the importance of the laity's involvement on many levels and social justice issues, I feel that some of the clarity of doctrine and morals has been somewhat lost. To aim for personal holiness we need that clarity to better know God's Will for us and how to better help others. Starting with Catholic education, while excellent on many fronts, there needs to be more done on the basic tenets of the Faith that used to be taught in the past but is not taught as much these days. It's not a matter of going back "to the old days" as some might see it, but putting more emphasis on doctrinal and moral issues. Whether in schools or Sunday homilies, we need to hear more about what marks us out as Catholics and Christ's true Church e.g. "Last Things", Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist, more talk and encouragement of the sacrament of Reconciliation, Our Lady, more on the teachings of the Church on marriage, sexuality, openness to life and other life issues prevalent in secular society. We (and children in schools) need to hear more of the patrimony of the Faith over the centuries—the great minds and doctors of the Church, the Saints etc. I fear at times they are being relegated to history rather than seen as examples and gifts to the Church as are all her perennial teachings. The Church exists to help us to eventually get to heaven, to live as holy lives as we can, to help us to have a deep personal relationship with Christ and bring others to Him, all of which can only be helped by better catechesis. Of course it can be said all the knowledge we have isn't what makes us holy, but if combined with personal spiritual formation and a deep prayer life it can only lead each of us to a deeper answer to that "Universal Call to Holiness".

How can one like me who has had a Catholic Church annulment in 1989 marry a partner, another Catholic Churchgoer who is a divorcee but whose previous Catholic marriage cannot be annulled? We have been in a relationship for 10 years and lived together for 5 years. He has been divorced for 19 years.

I think God is asking us to try to differentiate between our faith and the administrators of the faith. I think God is asking us to raise our voices to our leaders to show concern that those responsible for the administration of our faith are reprising the actions and attitudes of the Pharisees of Jesus' time. Arrogance, self-serving, pride, dogmatic and lacking humility, mercy and respect for the faithful. The use of vestments and titles emphasizes the thinking that the clergy are above everyone else both in a lot of the minds of clergy and parishioners. I think this has turned a lot of faithful away. I think God is asking us to recognise the Christ in all and to increase Ecumenism so that more can share the joy of shared beliefs.

I worry that when I die, and therefore stop attending Mass there will be no one to replace me. The congregation will shrink by one. I think the Church has to find a way to reach out to people, because what we are doing now is not working. I suggest that meditation room / coffee shop / reading room be established in a busy shopping centre. A calm quiet atmosphere could be a neutral meeting place for people curious about religious faith to feel no pressure in their spiritual enquiries. There could be an invitation to other Christian churches to participate. I worry that among priests who have left their ministry, some would welcome a return to active service, and yet we never talk about it. I worry that the question of women priests is never spoken of. I have heard that there will never be women priests in the Catholic Church, but I do not know why. The silence on the subject allows me to think there is no strong theological reason for this, that the reason is simply closed thinking by the present priestly bureaucracy.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Provide daily Mass and explanations about it to children and adults. —Faithfulness to the Teachings of Jesus Christ. —Bring others to the Catholic faith. —Learn about and teach the Catholic faith to the people in its entirety—not watered down. —To keep people happy. —Provide opportunities for prayers , adoration , processions , in the parish—on going. —Encourage children, parents, youth to know and learn about all the beliefs of our faith, prayers and practices.
<p>Having heard the recent conviction of Cardinal Pell, God is asking us for forgiveness that ignoring the sexual abuse that has been occurring for far too long in Australia. The power that we have allowed men of cloth and high positions to hold and pretend that all the abuse is not happening. Moving from that, God is also asking us in Australia to listen to the young generation, our future leaders, to give them a voice and role to grow and lead. The Church in Australia is still young; yet the leaders are stereotypical old white males; some with archaic views of women and youth. Pope Francis made a comment on how women can help in this season of healing, restoration and redemption. Women have had enough of white men telling us what we should and shouldn't do. The Australian Church leaders need to be diversified and represent the numerous cultures in Australia. We are no longer stuck in the 1950s or 60s. Women and youth must have a voice. And if they don't know how to raise their voices, then we need leaders who can guide and mentor them. It is time to let their light shine and not keep it under a bushel. I am not advocating for women priests but rather for women to have senior leadership in the Church. We need wider representation. We also need to encourage the youth to continue to keep the faith despite all the abuse. God wants us to be accepting of all despite their sexual preferences. Love is love. The greatest commandment from Jesus is to love one another. This commandment must be demonstrated and not merely words.</p>
<p>God is asking me to be part of an Australian Church that is inclusive of all people, that is renewing itself, a Church where ALL people can participate and can be equal before the Lord. and to be seen to be equal.</p>
<p>To restrict the admission of homosexual priests into the priesthood.</p>
<p>God is asking us to treat everyone equal. Recognising mistakes of the past.</p>
<p>To change the structure of the Church by 1) allowing priests to marry, and 2) to allow women to become deacons. By all Catholics to read, reflect and share with others on daily scripture readings.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be relevant, to be a part of 21st century, to be inclusive, to be less patriarchal.</p>
<p>1. Providing easy access to resources that clearly explain the doctrines of the faith. This would ideally go beyond simply stating what those teachings are, but providing a sound and digestible form that explains why the Church teaches what it does. Importantly, this involves providing a proper philosophical and theological foundation for the Church's doctrine, that young people can study and understand, without having to undertake a university degree. This provides them with a channel to understand Church doctrine and to understand the truth that Jesus Christ wants to teach us. 2. These resources would be most helpful if they were in a place that is: a. Online; b. Free; c. Easy to access; and d. Presented in an aesthetically pleasing way. Currently, while many good explanations of the doctrines of the Church are contained in a variety of excellent books, young adults often don't come across these explanations. 3. The Church and its teachers need to be proactive in advertising and spreading good resources that teach the doctrines of the faith. Bookshops are a helpful resource, especially when online, but they do not proactively reach out with their products. The Church needs to prepare products and be active in promoting them and reaching out to people with those resources. 4. Teachers, whether lay or clergy, need to clearly understand the Church's doctrine and to faithfully teach it. Better formation for catechists, those preparing young people for marriage, or ongoing formation for priests, will help to ensure that the teaching of the Church is faithfully passed on.</p>
<p>God is asking us to have relevance that encourages young people back into the Church.</p>

God is asking us to stop worrying about man-made rules and live our lives following God's rules.
We need to look at the current position with priests and children. Church needs to structure in such a way that the priests are given every opportunity to be with our Grandchildren. Without our knowledge in some court cases the children were not believed but the priests were I think that the Church needs to have more full time lay people working in the Church with authority. The Catholic Church needs to be more transparent. The perpetrators of child abuse within the Church should be excommunicated as well as imprisoned and any clergy covering up should also be excommunicated and imprisoned. Should bishops have the say as to Deacons carrying out duties as some diocese don't agree. Need to look at the Church. It appears to be top heavy. Need to speak to everyone. Need to look at the next generation as they are not coming to Church or Mass. We need to include their thoughts. To look at our Catholic faith as a wonderful gift from God which gives us happiness and peace. Talking regularly to our grandchildren about God and the Holy Family especially at Christmas and Easter. As of Senior age to keep setting a good example for our adult children by attending Mass and the sacraments.
Transparency and Equality from the Catholic Hierarchy in Rome.
I think God is asking us to know Him, Love Him and create a civilization of life and love. God has no hands and feet but ours, and He depends on us to bring about this civilization of life and love in our world last we fall into barbarism as is a real threat in our day and age. A great deal of the problem is the lack of formation in Catholic doctrine that we have received over the past 40 or so years. Young people are turning to green left philosophies because it is THERE and they haven't been taught any serious philosophy or Theology either at Catholic schools or from priests during the homily. The intellectual level of homilies is frightening, and we seem to be fed a 'dumber down' Catholicism. The problem with this is that the more intelligent members of the congregation will often search elsewhere for fulfilment and we end up with so-called 'Catholics' heading up 'The Greens' or leading the charge in the persecution of religion! Our priests and Teachers, must start teaching Catholic doctrine, philosophy and Theology clearly and faithfully. We need our faith leaders to equip us in this crazy world that we're living in! To educate us on the nature of the human person, made in the image and likeness of God—on The Church's moral teachings, especially contraception which has been at the root of the sexual revolution and the evil of abortion with it. Time and time again Catholics have told me that they have NEVER heard these things preached about by the priest. Catholics need to be informed if we have any hope of living the ideals that the Church lays out for us for OUR benefit!! PLEASE INSTRUCT THE FAITHFUL!!
To follow him and have strong leaders in the Church that guide the flock in the right direction.
I think that the Church should get on with, look to the future and stop whinging about its problems. It is tiresome to go to Mass each Sunday and hear endlessly about the Church's problems re: child molesting.
God is calling Australians to have a Church where they people are more involved. He wants less involvement by the Church hierarchy, and wants to remove all forms of clericalism. God wants a Church that is full of life, where people care for and love each other and not just bums on seats once a week, and then go home. God wants to Church with people, ordinary people, can make decisions about the future of the Church. God is not pleased with the power being held by bishops and priests who still to this day laud it over others.
More faith in its people (especially in people who call themselves Catholic or any other religion). Generosity, kindness and respect towards people with other religions, beliefs and values.
As Catholics we should live as Catholics. Our lives should manifest the teachings of Jesus in our relationships with our family, colleagues, neighbours through our cheerful attitude and helpful demeanour. We should take upon ourselves to know our faith so we can be an effective instrument of spreading the faith. We should try make this faith attractive to people and relevant to everyday life.

To remain faithful to the magisterium of the Church. To develop strong personal relationships with Jesus Christ through His word and the sacraments.
Christian formation of genuine disciples to work in the Church. In diocesan offices, schools, welfare and care agencies. Especially our leaders and manager need to be authentic Christians first, committed disciples second and committed Catholic thirdly. If we cannot employ this standard to our Church agencies then they should suspend operations until such time as individuals can be formed for this work i.e. the mission of Jesus as performed by his Church. We do not exist to provide employment, we are on mission. Faith formation of adults has been sadly lacking so it stands to reason that we do not have people suitable for employment in ministry. We need to focus our energies at every level of the Church to formation of disciples.
To reform the priesthood by opening it up to people other than single males. We need to be more inclusive of married people and women. The priesthood should no longer be an elite group that operates without accountability or supervision. Priests need to focus on the spiritual development of God's people and not the administration of the Church. The focus of the priest should be the presiding over the sacraments for which they are ordained i.e. Eucharist and Reconciliation. The rest of the role can be performed by lay people. Parish priests should face annual review and renewal of contracts, thus be accountable to the parish. We can look to the processes used by the Anglican Church to appoint and review priests.
God is asking us to teach the truth, the truth in and from the Gospel. It is not about opinions and it is not about minorities or majorities, just simply the truth. We are called to love, but because we love somebody it doesn't mean we have to agree with everything the other person does. Because we love we tell the other person when he/ she is wrong. We don't have to tolerate everything. Sometimes the truth hurt but only then healing and growing can begin and that is true love. Truth is not a compromise. Either something is true or it is not. Either I believe in God or I don't and I have to face the consequences of my decision. I can't say to God: "Stay out of my life" and then blame him if something happens.
To realize Christ's vision in our world. To be a Church of Agape rather than clericalism. For a leadership which embraces God's created image "male and female He created them"—this doesn't need to mean female priests but a structure of balance more in keeping with the early Church.
God is asking us to love all others and to serve—inclusion of all (divorcees, LGBTIQ, other Christian communities)—help those in need (poor, elderly, vulnerable, abused) I also think God is asking us to be humble, no person of the faith is better than another. We are all equal in front of God.
Inclusiveness.
To evangelise about God's love for all. And demonstrate that love through ensuring social justice for all.
To grow a deep interior life and so that all our (good) actions are not just noise or fad as they will be found on deep Faith, Hope and Charity. 1) The Holy Mass is a keystone of our faith. Hence, bring back all those who do not attend Sunday Mass. For those who do encourage especially young professionals to attend an extra Mass each week. This would also means Mass time be available before or after work hour. 2) Encourage family prayer as it is a vital source of grace to our community as a well as a means to form our young. 3) Create opportunity to deliver sound doctrinal formation to the community especially to post teens so that they have sound foundation to their belief and be a role model in the society.
I think that God wants us to be coherent with our Faith, putting it into practice in everything we do every day, in our work, family and social life not been afraid to stand for our beliefs, especially regarding moral issues. To be open and understanding with everybody living charity as we should with individuals but on the other hand being firm in what we know is right in the eyes of God, being convinced that it is the best for our country and society. To live charity and understanding with everybody that people can feel the love of God through us. We also need to understand

where people come from, a total ignorance in some cases, of what is good and evil, so with patience we have to teach them the basics. I would suggest that also with Catholics we do not take anything for granted and we invest in catechism in the schools, parishes, family homes.
I think God is asking us to be more inclusive in his family.
He is asking the same thing as He did over 2000 years ago. That through HIS Church we become holy and win the prize of Heaven.—To believe all the Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches, by reception of the sacraments and obedience to the authority He Himself established. It is through the Church that He lives on today in the world—not only Australia. Too much time is spent arguing about scandals and what Christ is asking of us when it is so clear God's Church is human as well as Divine. He warned us of scandals but also made a promise that He would not hold out against HIS CHURCH .
To actively live the values and behaviour of Christianity. To see the message and hear the word of God, not the rules of the bureaucratic Church hierarchy. To pursue peace in our hearts, minds and souls within ourselves and in the acceptance of others' perspectives.
To love him and follow the ten commandments. As an older person, how to bring the younger generation to keep their faith and care for one another.
I say this with love for the Catholic Community and our unity around the Eucharist. I have remained a regular church-goer as I have been lucky enough to have had a very wise mother to balance the old style teaching of Catholic Doctrine in the 1960s and because I have sought wonderful spiritual mentors within my time in the Church. I do, however, believe that the clericalism within the Church and the role the Vatican plays with its monarchical style and its membership being almost entirely male, needs some reform. I think of Christ who said that someone who harms an innocent child would be better to have a millstone placed around their neck!! We must normalise the Church so it is truly representative of its members, men, women, children. Christ came to give us freedom not to be yoked to outmoded rules such as celibacy introduced in the 11th Century and nearly abolished in 16th Century! We need to make celibacy a choice. We need some priests who left Holy Orders to marry to be reinstated, for some priests who have the gift of celibacy to join them and for women to be invited to enter priesthood. Our Church must be a place of joy, peace, love and celebration and must make welcome ALL people at every level of the Church—all gender orientations, social groups, ages, societal levels, races. Our liturgy must allow for a peaceful reflective space especially at the Eucharist with fewer interruptions to the mood. Money collections and sitting and standing should be considered carefully. I watched a program last night where a leading female Catholic politician and theologian has withdrawn her labour from a Church that is propping up those within it who are doing damage to the essence of Christ's message. Imagine if all women withdrew their labour—what would be left? I welcome this opportunity for the laity to have a say in what God wants for the Church in Australia in the 21st Century. I originally thought it was a PR stunt to take the focus away from the horrors of child abuse. I now believe it is a genuine attempt by the many wonderful, holy and good members of the Church to let the Spirit enter and bring the Church back to the people. I have many friends and family who have given up being Catholic but who see it as unreflective of the society we live in. These are very good people lost to our community. I feel lucky that my mother worked hard on her spirituality and spoke openly about her doubts, worries and concerns but never stopped being open and praying, She also sought out other dynamic Christians. I was lucky but not many other friends and relatives lost to our community. I pray the Spirit guides us to a renewal of the essence of the message of Christ.
As in all times, faithfulness—faithfulness to the Gospel and to the radical message of Jesus Christ. This is a time of great purification and suffering for the Church and is therefore a call to return to Jesus in simplicity, humility and radicalism. There is, I think, a danger when we try to think too much about what God might be saying, for God has already spoken through his Word, the Word who has become flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. The incarnation, passion, death and resurrection are what God has spoken to us and continues to speak to us. He asks of us each

day to respond to this Word through repentance, discipleship, and mission. Thus the Church must, with renewed vigour, proclaim the Word and, with the voice of Christ, exhort each of us to repent/convert, to follow/learn, and proclaim the good news. In a time and in a country that is often indifferent or hostile to faith it is tempting to do two things: one is to mingle with the indifference and become so like the world that fidelity to Christ runs second to a misguided fidelity to the times and the culture that we live; another temptation is to hunker down, protect ourselves from the world and "hold on" to Jesus. However the Catholic response is never either/or, it is both/and. We need to be "separate" from the world, to be close to Jesus and his Church, to be nourished in Communities that form us and help us to grow humanly and spiritually. But we also need to engage the world we live in, to understand it, to desire to change it, and to find ways to draw people closer to Jesus. The most important thing for the Church is to encourage authentic communities of faith and formation where a true Christian humanism, based on the virtues, can flourish. It is from there that the engagement with the world will happen naturally, especially with lay people in their day-to-day lives but also, with the Holy Spirit, through new ideas and initiatives that can speak to our brothers and sisters today who seem far from the Lord.

I think God wants us to reclaim the culture. Catholic culture had a huge part in the formation of Western civilisation. We need to bring the positive aspects of our faith forward and stop being beaten down because of loud, distorted media drive public criticism. One suggestion I make—take back the festival of Mardi Gras. It's a deeply Catholic cultural event and an enjoyable one that brings people together. In every major cathedral or Church a group could organise a pancake evening in the grounds and invite stall holders etc. to cater for families and individuals. There could be a Mass at the start and then the pancakes. Everyone could then prepare for Ash Wednesday and Lent in a real community setting. It's not a slap in the face to the gay community and would not try to be. But as in old times when the Church replaced pagan festivals with Christian ones, this would simply be reinstating a latent one. Just a thought.

Therefore, in both Questions Our Holy Father Pope Francis has appealed to bishops to propagate the Faith not only under the truths and laws of the Truths and Magisterium of the Church but within the customs and expectations of the local and faithfully informed Laity, (rather than the uninformed and / or ideologically influenced). That the Catholic Church and bishops of Australia be the first to proclaim and include as an ideal—if not the absolute—the faithful form of Divine Worship and together with also to faithfully present the sacraments and faithfully teach the Catholic Faith, as well as promote and teach about Living God's Divine Will on Earth as it is in Heaven across all Diocese and Catholic Schools, so as to instil a far deeper appreciation and knowledge of God, Their Catholic Faith and striving for a long life of sanctity. The truth is that what we have been teaching our youth in particular and community in general, in this modern 21st century—with its ever increasing temptations—is not getting through, nor has it sustained their faith since what has been taught has been watered down.

Faithfulness to his doctrine Reverence in the sacraments.

- Better formation for both laity and priests to understand the deep Catholic faith (e.g. regular doctrine). Doctrine that presents the beauty of the truth (i.e. address the misunderstanding that doctrine is a set of rules but helps people understand reasons for the "set of rules" as coming from love and truth to lead to personal relationship with Jesus Christ).
- Regular reception of sacraments and promotion of the sacraments as primary source of grace.
- Catholic schools: to teach orthodox Catholic faith and form teachers in the same to reduce the current confusion of so many young people (who are the present and future of the Church) in what the Church and faith truly stands for and why. Catholic schools religious education classes are not taken seriously (and therefore communicates that not even the Church believes in their own teachings) or teaches serious errors (e.g. promotion of abortion) or used as social justice/history class (e.g. classes on other religions without emphasising on the truth of the Catholic faith).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Build-up of good families as building blocks of society and domestic Church. Formation and support of traditional families, who can set examples. -Return of reverence at Masses starting with the priests as examples as Persona Christi and orthodox liturgical form that facilitates proper worship and direct hearts to God. -Promotion of Catholic prayer (e.g. adoration) -Ongoing doctrinal and personal formation especially about the real presence of God in the Eucharist -Raise awareness of universal call to holiness (i.e. Christian vocation for sanctity and apostolate) through baptism and provision of practical help in this process (e.g. regular sacraments, spiritual direction). -Proclamation of true and orthodox Catholic teachings that is not watered down, delivered with love. Truth attracts and needs to be presented ("The truth is like a lion. You don't have to defend it. Let it loose. It will defend itself." -St Augustine). -Ongoing formation of priests in Orthodox Catholic doctrine and supporting priests post-seminary years.
<p>To become one with the Word through E.W.T.N. Have faith that there will no longer be sexual abuse. I think God's message hasn't changed however God is asking Australia to listen to its people, the congregation—they want change, a more progressive Church. At a time of instability, tolerance and acceptance should be encouraged, so we can all live in peace. To nurture our faith and be respectful of other religions/belief systems.</p>
<p>We, the people of God are facing many challenges both without and within our Church in Australia. Challenges from an increasingly secular society and challenges from a dysfunctional—and ageing—clerical Church. I feel God is calling us, both the ordained and laity, to respond in new and different ways for the times we live in.</p>
<p>A more inclusive and welcoming Church focused on God, love, spirituality rather than on itself as an institution. To be a Church that reaches out to others in love. (see attachment)</p>
<p>Parish Adult Education: Catechism/Compendium main tools. Topics; e.g. Faith explained sacraments Mass/ Eucharist Confession-why go etc.? There is an obvious gap in knowledge of our Faith, which causes people to lose their Faith over a period of time, esp. coming out of school.</p>
<p>To nourish our faith through ongoing formation. Some of the faithful do not have access to this. I have been blessed to have found Opus Dei. There are monthly recollections for any men, women, mothers or Fathers. All are welcome. I would love to find more women to benefit especially from the personalised sound spiritual direction. I have had many worries about how our families and society are being weighed down in moral corruption. I have been so lucky to be blessed with all the support to get through raising our 10 children plus 10 grandchildren in this environment. Some of my friends and their children are</p>
<p>Summary of about 30 individual responses from [-], [-] and [-] • Live the Gospel and keep the Commandments. • Welcome, respect and accept our diversity be it in race, creed or sex. • Review and expand the scope of Holy Orders and Professed Life covering eligibility, selection, training (particularly in Leadership abilities), mentoring, supervision and support (clergy to live in communities). • Faith development for adults—a continuing conversion and relationship journey (from primary/secondary school based faith to maturity). • Love our Neighbour as ourselves—care and support the vulnerable, marginalised and poor. • Acknowledge and encourage the giftedness of the laity particularly in leadership and decision making roles. • Dismantle clericalism and Church hierarchy power.</p>
<p>Eucharistic devotion. In my years of working with Catholic youth, I have discovered that when the Mass is well explained to young people—being both communion and sacrifice—they end up loving the Mass. Also, I have observed over the years that those parishes that foster Eucharistic Adoration, the apostolic fruits are abundant and especially vocations to the priesthood and religious life. As a practical suggestion I would like that parish churches think about designing a prayer room that has a separate secure entrance from outside to allow parishioners a view to the</p>

Tabernacle and to be able to pray outside normal opening hours. The room has a security lock with a code known only by the parish priest who communicates it only to those who want to use the room for personal prayer. I have seen this in a number of churches in Perth and the rooms are well used.

Sacramental Confession. This sacrament is absolutely essential in the life of a practicing Catholic however it is rarely preached and taught, either in parishes or in Catholic schools. When there has been so much talk about the past wrongs and the Church needs to repair past sins, I am convinced that this has been allowed to happen because the focus has gone away from confession since the 60s. Confession brings so much joy and peace to souls. My suggestion is that priests need to be well-trained in this sacrament and it be preached and practiced by them regularly. I think we should learn from the Maronite Church who, when available, have a priest in the confessional during the celebration of Sunday Mass and many people avail themselves of his services, many times they are young people.

To be a more welcoming, less judgemental and inclusive Church that listens with an open heart to others. To live joyfully as a Christian community.

That we are able to practice our faith in a way that is relevant to today's society. That we are true to the gospel messages and teachings. Today's Church is out of step with the essential message of Jesus. The main game is a personal relationship with Jesus/God. The Church should be about a connection via a shared spirituality. The Church should strive to help our society engage with the message of Christ. It should also be about spirituality rather than religion. The Church should lead on social justice issues.

To provide hope and inspiration in today's rapidly evolving and chaotic times; to continue evolving Church guidance on dealing with new attitudes towards the fringe, divorced, gay, remarried; to be relevant to a changing society; to rebuild our sense of community; set an example for the community; Church leaders to be more integrated in the community; to lead by example; to bring in more joy in serving and worshipping God; to be open., transparent, communicative and take responsibility; to have energy and transparency for change; take a more proactive stance on the development of Catholic children's faith; to help the poor, educate, provide services to those who need it; to provide companionship; to open our minds to other people's ideas and thoughts for the common good; to be louder on social justice issues; to stand up for what we believe in; to reveal God to the world; to ordain females as priests; to show how Christ would live in the modern world. To live out his example in providing moral and ethical leadership and to love all and be welcoming and inclusive; to refocus Church's teachings on developing personal relationships with God and not dogma; to go back to the key messages of Jesus; to judge less and love more; to take the time to slow down to form relationships with a wider community of people.

To love and nurture our souls and those of others especially children; God is also asking us to stand up for what we believe in and remain true to Christ's message; to reveal God's face to the world and live a joyful and rich life.

To have inclusive, participatory and life giving liturgy. For the Church to live out what Jesus modelled for us—unconditional love, non-judgement, openness to all. To be an example to the world of what ...

I believe that God is asking the Baptised of His Church to understand again, that the Bride of Christ is both Supernatural and Natural. From my experience, many from the religious and laity have lost the Grace of Understanding. The Natural character of the Church has become mainly a charitable and social organisation focused on humanity and less so focused on God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. How many of our priests really believe that Holy Mass is the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ and it is His Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity truly present on the altar caused by the words of consecration said by the priest at Mass? How many religious and laity believe this is so? Do you,

who are reading this, believe this is so? It is from this doctrine of our Faith that we must re-build our Church. An interesting exercise would be to reconcile the differences in belief and works of our Church now when compared with decades or centuries past. We would find differences but who is right? In this day we say our generation is right and we look to society as a barometer of determining how far away the Church is from popular opinion and look for ways to close the gap. Unfortunately, we fall into the trap of considering ourselves “modern” and “more informed” than our predecessors. We think of ourselves as different from the past with unique challengers, new scientific theories and a globally connected reality. God never changes. However, are we really different? We are the same genetically and psychologically though generally we may be taller due to richer diets. What have changed in society are the increase in suicide rates, divorce, prenuptial co-habitation and a fall in the belief in God as defined by the Catholic Church and a paradoxical increase in narcissistic belief. Some poor people don’t know if they are male or female. Society is suffering from an existential crisis and many in the Church see the answer to Her current woes as embracing society rather than offering the true meaning of life, that is: to obtain a non-guaranteed eternal life after death in Heaven with God. It is insanity to think that if the Church becomes more like society, that it will attract more members. Why at the human level would a person join an organisation that only provides what they already have? During the 1980s in my late teens and 20s many joined “new age” movements and Buddhism as the Catholic Church appeared devoid of direction, education and spiritual nourishment while these other philosophies and beliefs seemed to satisfy. I was one of them. Now the young and my older self are attracted to the Latin Mass and Thomistic studies. The Church for decades has struggled to attract the young back to The Faith. It would appear that the answer is to recognise that a grave mistake has happened that is more profound than that of “New Coke” from 1985—old Coke was better. We must be brave and save the Church from near destruction. Bring back the Faith in Humility!

To be a more welcoming and less judgemental Church; to outreach, love and include others; to listen to the youth; to hear God's voice and listen with an open heart to others; to live joyfully; it is our time now to take up the mantel and spread Jesus message to keep our Church alive.

To be tolerant, to be inclusive, to be humble, to stop with the man-made nonsense that signifies the Church not only is archaic Roman structure but also the clothes worn by bishops etc., the polarised positions taken on issues, and OMG the man-made rules such as priest celibacy that has to be urgently rectified. The Mass is changed to be this all singing event, no longer solemn and prayerful and with poor singers it takes you away from the purpose, no surprise, limited Church attendances.

Regarding young people: My 26 year old daughter started a yoga business a few years ago and I sometimes go to her yoga class. I go to Mass on Sundays and some weekdays. The Holy Spirit is showing me the packed yoga class—filled with young people. My daughter quietly prays within her heart to Jesus to help her and the people in her class. I marvel at how these young adults arrive with their yoga mats in a quiet manner, laying in silence on their mats until start of yoga. The room is dimmed and has candles, sometimes light music played in background. At the end of class these young people quietly get up and leave and don't speak until outside of the room. They treat the yoga room like a church. My daughter has had to get a bigger studio to accommodate the increase in these young adults (and older adults too, and some children). I believe with the movement of the body and in the quiet that these people are connecting with God within them, whether they are conscious of this or not. My point is that these young people are in tune with the quiet and when I think of Sunday Mass, I feel it is very "wordy". Full of words, whether in song or in the scripted liturgy. I like weekday Mass because for me in the quieter Mass, I can focus more fully on the Word and the Eucharist. Weekday Mass has a definite lead up to the Eucharist with quiet spaces... Sunday Mass is full of words with little space for silence and quiet prayer. I feel too much emphasis has been placed on youth songs to bring them to Church, and perhaps more emphasis on the importance of the Eucharist and the sacred quiet. Even a reminder during Mass of the sacred importance of what the priest is doing regarding the consecration to help children

and people of other faiths who may be in the Church. I feel at the moment the priest almost has to rush to get all those words out in the Sunday Mass.
WE feel God is asking us to open to new ideas to help move the Church forward in its thinking yet remain faithful to the truest meaning of being Catholic. The Australian Church is caring towards others who need support and assistance and should continue to do so. We need a kinder acceptance and tolerance of each other. We feel God is asking us to show people what is right. Should our focus be on acceptance rather than rules? Can we accept those who are struggling with faith, sexuality and life? Is it time for more female involvement in the Church to assist with workload. We have a desire to see the Catholic Church grow and we want to see acceptance be the key to assisting the Catholic Church move forward. Thank you for the opportunity for this forum.
To be an outward looking Church building on a rich history of care for the suffering and those enduring poverty. To invite adults and young people into our faith community. To safeguard children and vulnerable adults. To be transparent about past crimes and cooperate fully with any police investigations. To truly value all members of humanity.
I think God is asking of us in Australia at this time to GET REAL ... and LIVE a beautiful life in the 21st Century. As an organisation, the Catholic Church is living by very old standards which were all, at some time or other, created by man. New standards, reasonable standards, standards for the 21st Century need to be brought in. Whether or not the Catholic Church wants to agree with Gay Marriages, gay marriages are now in, LEGAL!! Whether or not the Catholic Church wants female priests, gender equality STANDS UP IN COURT. The Catholic Church is missing out on the wonderful insightful leadership of women because it is too stubborn to allow them to be ordained. Priests are few in number, partly because they need/crave the intimacy of a life partner. We, the people, are the Church. It is not the buildings, and it is certainly not the hierarchy... it's the people, because without them the hierarchy would be without followers. I know this is a simplistic viewpoint, but it really is time for the Catholic Church to realise the errors of its ways (and there have been a few lately!), apologise to the people they've been hoodwinking and treat everyone with the kindness, love and sincerity they/we all deserve.
To help those who have lost their faith to rekindle their relationship with God. To be more transparent and open to those who are different to us/rejected God and continue having dialogue with them. And also to appeal to the youth as the future leaders in our society. To help form them in understanding and knowing their faith and better doctrine.
<p>—To uphold the traditional teachings, values and beliefs that have been passed down the ages and entrusted to us to pass on to future generations.</p> <p>—To not bow down to public pressure or popular opinion but remain true to our faith.</p> <p>—For strong priests, bishops and clergy to have a strong, coherent, intelligent and compassionate public voice when defending our faith and upholding our values.</p> <p>—To engage more with youth and young families so that they start and keep coming to Mass, and especially to make it a point to make Sunday Mass a welcoming place for families with young children who may find it challenging to attend given the age and attention span of their children.</p> <p>—To have Catholic schools that are faithful to the mission, values and beliefs of the Catholic Church.</p>
To Pray for individuals to come back to the Church. To be brave and talk to others about Our Lord and so spread the Faith. To challenge the gaps in our parish in regard to faith education among the parishioners. To pray for people to be receptive to the available adult education.
God is asking us to make major changes in the culture of our Church to demonstrate that we understand the Gospel and how our Church has failed in demonstrating the Good News. I think it is obvious that we have to adapt to modern times in every facet of Church life, e.g. people aren't at Sunday Mass any more but they are at yoga classes and meditation classes all times of day and night. The Church may have to radically sacrifice its assets for the victims of child sexual abuse and start all over again.

The education of the youth and parents is very important. My suggestions are: 1 a) in Catholic schools that from Kindergarten on children are given a knowledge of their Catholic Faith. This should be age appropriate and based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. b) Apart from the knowledge of the faith they need to be taught to use their heart with God: to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; c) They should be shown how to live their faith in ordinary life: a unity between faith and life. d) To be taught/shown to do things for love of God and others. 2. Teachers: a) should be practising Catholics with a deep knowledge and love of the Faith. Teachers teach "who" they are. b) Teachers need ongoing input to sustain their work, as well as being encouraged to pray daily and have regular recourse to the sacraments. 3. Parents: Schools/parishes could run programmes for parents helping them to pass on the Faith to their children. They cannot pass on what they don't live. Many have very little knowledge of the Catholic Faith themselves. They would need input on the Faith and help to practise it themselves, as well as tips of how to pass this on in a loving and actual way to their children. Parents need to foster in their children a loving relationship with Jesus Christ, and of course his Mother, not forgetting St Joseph either. 4) These times call for a great renewal of Faith. This will come about with capillary teaching of the fullness of the faith in contemporary ways in Schools, the parish and within the family. 5) The parish priests should be urged to preach with depth, an evident love for the Faith and Jesus Christ, and at the same time in a language that can be understood by everyone. Perhaps they need some training too! Thank you!

I believe God is asking us to go back to the teachings of Jesus—to walk beside each other, listen, love, discern and care for the most marginalized and fragile in our communities. To return to our heart and God dwelling within for guidance. To look to our Nation's first people for the wisdom of their spirituality and deep connection with our land and to walk towards reconciliation of all the brokenness in our communities. Together we can all have an impact on creating an Australia that is inclusive, respectful, compassionate and one grounded in LOVE.

Promote Congregational Unity: Beginning with the people who attend Mass, invite everyone to spend at least half an hour with another Church member each week. The aim of this "requirement" is to end the isolation that too many parishioners feel at Church. It intrigues me how smaller congregations bond much more readily than larger churches. If the parish Council suggested a project to work on, the bonding might happen spontaneously.

I think God is asking us into good firm to our true beliefs in a society that is growing more and more at odds with Jesus' teaching. The Church has never been based on appeasing progressive viewpoints, which are often rooted in feelings and a media bias. The Church is Church because it was founded on God's laws and principles, and these are the principles that we must look to go for guidance. The core tenets of the Church that have allowed the Church to withstand 2000 years of being discriminated against and persecuted. Protestant churches and an increasing number of 'pick your own beliefs' strains of Christianity attempt to change the Church to fit into modern values. This has never been God's will for the Church and the change of these churches reaching away from Jesus' teaching is a clear reminder that we must hold fast to our traditions and look to the strong history of our Church for guidance, rather than youthful movements to radicalise the Church. We do not need to change the Church to appeal to young people but more fully display the unyielding and moral truth that is the Church and always will be the Church.

We believe God is asking us in Australia at this time to be faithful to the teachings of Jesus Christ which he left us in the Church he founded on Peter to enable us to achieve salvation. For families to also take responsibility for educate their children in the true faith and not abdicate their role to others. Because clearly there are many confusing messages about our faith from both the Christian community as well as the Catholic Church. Within the Catholic Church our central teaching authority is the Vicar of Christ yet within the Church we have seen his teachings on faith and morals being questioned and with often contradictory personal interpretations so no wonder Catholics are confused. In addition, the support within the Church of some issues such as same-sex marriage further compounds the confusion and ultimately leads people to believe that it's OK

if their conscience tells them it's OK and as a result we have a congregation that believes it can select what is convenient and disregards fundamental teachings which conflicts with their lifestyle. A dedicated and obedient clergy is fundamental to helping families educate their children and help parents reinforce these fundamental teachings of the Church. To assist in better education it is critical that:

- Religious teachers at Catholic schools are themselves living their Faith. Stricter review of the calibre of teaching should be regularly undertaken.
- Increased solicitation of volunteer catechists to target the many children attending non-Catholic schools.
- Recognise that not all parish priests are wonderful orators and hence better use of technology in having first class videos screened at Mass on important topics by well qualified and articulate speakers. This also ensures a consistent message is being delivered
- Increased attention to youth and youth programs to better address the confused environment our youth find themselves in today. Further suggestions attached in a separate document.

I believe this Plenary has come at the right time. God is asking and wanting us, the Church as people of God and institution, to take a step back and reflect on where we have come from, our current situation, and where we are going. In doing so, I believe the Church needs to humble itself; to bring it all back to Jesus' pastoral example and be with his flock. In the light of recent events, building up for decades now, the Church is not currently in a position to be the public voice it has been in its past. Clergy (and others) that are still behaving this way, speaking and looking down at those inside and outside the congregation, appear more and more out of touch with the reality and people in our world today. The Church has become the judge that Jesus asked it not to be, and has lost God's mercy and compassion to those that need it most. God is asking us to bring it back to Jesus. To humble ourselves, to be with and in God's people in its entirety and all creation; especially with the vulnerable and poor, those on the outskirts, and the care of the world we all live in. By behaving this way, by being fully immersed in the reality of the world today as Christ's Body, we can better show the world who and why we are, and who Christ is. Our words are failing; they hold less and less importance, but our pastoral mercy, actions and social justice, like Jesus, will reveal to this world the love that is God.

To re-ignite the next generation of Catholics. I believe the Catholic Church has significantly lost its way in trying to attract young people. I believe it has tried to keep young people interested by changing the way it goes about trying to do exactly this. It focuses too much on trying to be cool, young and hip. Young people will find the Church much more attractive if it sticks to its core values, beliefs and is forward, strong, and stern in how it articulates its stance on issues. Trying to come across as being flexible and open is not the way to attract young people. It needs to remain strong, hard-lined and vocal on topics. Trying to attract young people by being soft in certain areas and cool/open, will only attract young people that ARE soft and open, and not considering and sticking by all the beliefs of the Church. If the Church is strong and sticks with what it has for centuries, it will attract strong and committed Catholics.

To be faithful and to have trust in Him. To be cheerful, positive, and not to despair or be depressed. To have confidence in Him—He will never abandon us.

In our Church there is no place for ambition, prestige and power. The higher the rank the greater the humility and service. Let our Church leaders guide and inspire us in our faith by example and as visionaries. Leave the nuts and bolts, finances etc. to lay people. Ensure women and men have equal roles in our Church. Let the Church be one of compassion. Leave judgement to God. Tolerance to all. Look at the total sum of a person's life. Honesty, being able to admit when you are wrong and compassion should be followed by the institution of the Church as a whole, just as it demands from its members. There is no room for protecting those in the Church who have done the wrong thing. We need renewal and reconciliation. We need inspiration and guidance through storytelling and relevant communication from our clergy. We need to get back to Jesus and away from being bogged down by the form of Church rather than substance.

To know our Catholic faith, live it and transmit it to others through our words and authentic actions.

I think God is asking for humility, compassion and healing. I feel as a Church we have been quite loud, defensive and even aggressive pushing the faith rather than expressing it through action and deed. At a time when we have lost all credibility in the public arena, and even with each other within the body of Christ itself, we can no longer assume a superior position or moral high ground. We are called to return to our roots; a community of believers from all walks of life, working together as different parts of one body. We are called to refocus our gaze on Jesus, taking our lead from His compassionate example. I think this requires us to let go of some of the traditions that we have built up around our community that no longer serve the mission but instead inhibit it. Many of these practices, traditions and rules are now more self-serving than at the service of God and His Church. God is calling us to a place of shared vulnerability, where His mission can be accomplished. This calls us to be innovative, to create environments where we are safe to fail and not fail safe. So many communities have become stale in their approaches. This does not mean throwing the baby out with the bath water; in fact our innovation may call us to renew tried and tested practices from our early Church. The key I feel to all of these is God is calling us to love—and love joyfully! In all we do, in all we say. And when we truly love, we admit our wrongs, ask forgiveness and work to make it better.

I think we need more emphasis on confession in Church, as most people only get Sunday Mass, they need to be reminded that confession is extremely important for their salvation.

God is asking for holiness from each one of us; a holiness that is simply the fruit of love, responding to His love for us. God is asking us to grow in our personal relationship with Him, each Person of the Trinity, only then can we bring Him to others, sharing in Christ's mission. So: growth in our personal relationship with God to grow in personal holiness and build the present and future Church in Australia on more solid foundations. The bar is high but we have the supernatural means—the Eucharist, all the other sacraments, prayer and spiritual direction. We just have to use them and make them available to everyone.

—To look after our priests better. They need a family environment to have their meals looked after so they feel appreciated and supported with deeds.

—Priestly celibacy is a treasure in the Church. It should not and hopefully will not ever change. There is so much pastoral wisdom behind it!

He is asking us to Love the unlovable. The gays, The old, The teenager, The priests, Everyone.

I believe God is asking us to stay alert and remain united, unwavering and Spirit-filled in the face of increasingly hostility towards Christians.

* No different to any other time in the past—to get to heaven by living a life of holiness. * Be faithful to the truth. * To be better formed in the catechism. * To know clearly what Jesus teaches. * To renew our zeal for the Eucharist, to hold Eucharistic processions through the schools, streets, cities. * To build strong faith-filled communities. * To better support each other through every stage of life. * To have pre and post marriage support. * To have mentors for each stage of life. * To provide support for young families through family groups, talks, prayer groups, babysitting. * To have strong family traditions e.g. Sunday Mass weekly, rosaries, First Friday devotions, First Saturday devotions. * Sunday school after Mass for kids of all ages through to grandparents. * More welcoming at all parishes. * More admin support for priests and Religious so they can be more available to personally be present at community events. * To have Eucharistic adoration every day of the week and devote each day to a specific cause e.g. for vocations, for the Pope and the Church, for families, for the unborn, for the sick, for the holy souls in purgatory. * Support groups for those who are experiencing same sex attraction as well as their families—helping them to seek God's call to true masculinity and femininity, that everyone is called to live chastely in accordance with God's will. * Life is to be protected no matter what age and that all life comes from God. * To ensure that there are specifically trained, practising Catholics as specialist Religious Education teachers in all Catholic schools (as opposed to specialist Sport, Art, Music teachers and non-practising/non-religious classroom teachers teaching RE in the

classroom). * To use the parish bulletin to transmit true Catholic teaching and links to good sites and books. * To make use of social media and multimedia (e.g. podcasts, blogs etc.) to help the faithful access good Catholic formation regularly.
I think that we need to be getting younger priests who are more relatable to the millennial generation. A big hindrance to this is, in my view, the fact that priests are forbidden from marriage. This rule makes little sense—as Jesus is the ultimate high priest who intercedes between us and God the Father, it doesn't make sense to me as to the basis upon which this rule for Catholic priests exists. If the Anglican Ministers can preach God's teachings whilst being permitted to marry, then why can't Catholic priests? I think releasing that restriction would attract younger people to ministry in the same way that young people in the Anglican community are attracted to MTS. Additionally, it makes sense to allow female priests. There's no need to hold onto rigid views of the past generations. It's not really justified biblically—those who say it are really just overanalysing. Let's focus on substance over form—equality and love, not foster boundaries and discrimination.
The main areas of concern include: 1. ongoing formation of priests including regular and deep spiritual accompaniment, 2. celibacy of priests be retained, 3. priests have a deep love of Jesus Christ, which they communicate by their lives, and a ready availability to serve the needs of the people entrusted to them. 4. Flowing from this, the availability of the sacraments especially daily Mass and regular times for confession. 5. Mass at a time that working people can attend.
Be faithful to the truth. Life is to be protected no matter what age and that all life comes from God. To better support each other through every stage of life. To know clearly what Jesus teaches.
I think He is asking us to renew and strengthen our faith and to inspire and assist others to do the same. I think that now, more than ever, He is asking us to stand up in these times of persecution; to be better in fighting for our faith and in defending it. I think he is asking us to better instruct our children in their faith and to teach them not only what it is but also why we practice it; in order to build better foundations for future generations.
I think God is asking us to engage more in our faith community. We don't have enough leaders (priests) and from my experience very few have been inspiring. Therefore we need to take it on ourselves to engage with our Church.
Sacramental Life—The Mass—The Mass should be the centrepiece of a Catholic's engagement with the Church. Further, the Mass is the most important thing in the life of a Catholic. Therefore, while discussing the centrality of the Mass and how Catholics engage in the Mass, we suggest the following: priests should vest properly in a way that befits the occasion. When saying Mass priests should stick to the prescribed methods in the missal. The priest's homily should be no longer than 5 minutes at weekday Mass and 10 minutes on Sunday. Every effort should be made to ensure the Mass is holy and prayerful. Some ideas to enhance this include: The Eucharistic prayer being said slowly to emphasise its centrality in the Mass. Priests should encourage the congregation to kneel (where possible) to show respect to Our Lord. Where possible, priests should avoid using extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist—they should, as their name suggests be used in extraordinary circumstances. Proper consideration should be given to the layout of the Church. Some things to think about include: Musicians setting up at the rear or the sides of the Church rather than at the front. Musicians are there to assist the prayer of the congregation—placing them at the front detracts from how prayerful the Mass is. The tabernacle should be at the centre of the Church, as Jesus Christ is at the centre of the Church. A crucifix should be prominently placed near the altar. The sanctuary should not be cluttered. Music is there to aid the congregation in their prayer. Music should be selected to serve this purpose. Music that overwhelms the Mass because of its rhythm and the instruments needed to play it should be discarded. The sacrament of Reconciliation. The Church should move away from 'confession rooms' back towards confessionals. This would help in the new post royal commission era. It would encourage people back to confession. There should be a 'guide to confession' in the pews to help prepare Catholics to make a good confession. Reconciliation should be readily available for

parishioners. It is not sufficient to only provide reconciliation on a Saturday afternoon for an hour. Confession might be made available during Sunday Mass by a visiting or retired priest. This would also help priests live fraternity with their brother priests. Confession should be made available to students while they are at school.

God is asking us to reflect on his core teachings in the light of our contemporary experience and history. His core teachings are:- to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and strength—love your neighbour as yourself. More than ever, we are capable of understanding these teachings in depth. Christ shows us that we are called to love God as he does, as an individual, a person with infinite dignity, relating to us personally and uniquely. In practise, this was emphasised very strongly in the pre-Vatican II era, but was expressed dogmatically, rather than personally. For individuals in the Church in Australia, as a first world westernised country, the pace of our lives and the distraction of media around us robs us of the time and commitment to go deeply into the real theology of God and our relationship with him, i.e. our formation. It seems that all Catholics who grew up in previous generations were given formation, but little depth about the rich theology that underlies it. My generation are called to encounter God in our own way, which is dignifying, but we are not formed in the core theology of the Church to begin with, nor challenged to explore the faith in depth. This at times leaves us with a sense that our beliefs about God aren't unique. God is asking us to encourage a deeper understanding of our beliefs about the person of God and our personal relationship with Him, which will help us to embrace a sense of a guiding conscience, objective morality and a prayerful life as necessarily stemming from a personal relationship with Him. The second teaching of Christ is a fulfilment of the first and an individual directive in its own right. Since we are all from God, you cannot love God fully without loving your neighbour. Also, each person has freedom and dignity, and therefore deserves love. This informs our personal relationships and our social justice. We are developing some excellent guides to married life and producing wonderful courses for men and women, but these are not advertised widely enough, and they are not followed up on with families after their first encounter. God is calling on the Church to help people break from busy lives and take time to enrich their communication skills, their expressions of love and reach out to their local community. On social justice, the Church must be a strong voice against partisanship, compounded by social media, which paints people of opposing views as enemies and not worthy of a voice. The Church needs to explain loudly why the spectrum of social issues of welfare, procreation/end of life, environment, sexuality and refugees are all equal issues of dignity and life. It needs to show that they are founded on the same theology and challenge Catholics to embrace them equally. Crucially, the Church must ensure that all who cover up abuse are exposed, and that the Church is transparent. Priestly formation and access to media should be reassessed. They must have psychological support.

To ensure as quickly as possible a contemporary Church, based on loving one another; lay leadership working alongside our religious; married male and female priests (optional, not mandatory); minimise emphasis on celibacy (celibacy should be optional); eliminate clericalism: abuse tribunals managed by experienced lay people alongside our religious: welcome all age groups/races/colours/creeds/gay people/non-Catholics/married/single/divorced/homeless etc. and do not deny any of them the right to practice Catholicism as they see fit in their own hearts; clarify to all Catholics that being ordained does not make any priest more powerful/supreme/Godly/special than any Catholic; allow Catholics to participate in the liturgy after suitable/approved training programs etc.

Firstly, we are called to reconnect with the fundamental point of difference that makes us Catholic and brings us closest to God; that is, the Mass and especially the Eucharist. Many Catholics fail to comprehend the true presence of God in the Eucharist, and hence devalue the significance of attending Mass in order to replenish their spiritual relationship with God. Secondly, in light of the failure to adequately address the child sexual abuse scandal, it would seem that part of the Church's ministry and obligation to young children—especially to males—requires a more mature

conversation about relationships, sexuality and respect for women. The process of discerning how to have these important conversations needs to bring more voices to the table than the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. In order to begin rebuilding trust in the Catholic Church in Australia, we need to emphasise the depth of Jesus' mercy and compassion for all people. This is best portrayed in a way that is relatable to the wider community through the social justice outreach activities of the Church and its agencies.

'The kingdom of God must be defended like any other kingdom.' (Becket, 1964) The world is changing. It is a secular, relativistic void that is no friend of the Church. Indeed, it hates Christ's Church and all that it stands for. But its hatred has never been so pronounced or so well resourced until now. We see this reflected in society, from the recent trial of Cardinal Pell or the culture of death that we live in, one that champions abortion and euthanasia. Such hostility Christians have not experienced for many an age. Against such an enemy we must wage not peace but war. We must fight every battle for religious freedom, for every unborn child and the elderly, for every Catholic falsely persecuted. This means defending the honour of Christ's Church from those within our own ranks: the Catholic politicians who support promote abortion, the priests who continue to give them communion, the bishops who refuse to publicly excommunicate them. We must profess and stand firm in our beliefs and fight against the rising tide. Our enemy does not sleep, and neither can we.

I believe God is asking us for a deeper faith shown by the witness of our lives. I believe we as Australians need to grow more in the KNOWLEDGE of our faith (doctrine). We cannot love and live what we do not know nor understand. We need clear doctrine—we need to go back to the whys of our faith and what we do and believe. We need to be guided clearly on RIGHT and WRONG (there are too many grey areas because people do not want to offend others, but it is our responsibility to speak the truth clearly). How do we do this? 1. Church—priests should use the pulpit to give clear doctrine on the sacraments especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation. So many Catholics have no idea what the Mass really is or its significance. So many do not have a clear understanding of the beauty of Confession, so how would they even think of seeking it? Are not the sacraments the sources of graces. Without grace how can we grow deeper in our faith and love for God and neighbour? 2. Our Schools—sadly my children went to a diocesan Catholic School on the Coast and what they did not receive was very, very sad and a reflection of the plight of our schools which are supposed to be there to help us parents in our task of transmitting the faith to our children. Some suggestions: Teachers should have ongoing formation/spiritual input (many of our teachers are not Catholics or not practising—how can they transmit the faith that they do not have?) sacraments available in the Schools—Holy days of obligation are not observed nor mentioned at all. There has to be a cohesiveness/a unity in giving our children ongoing doctrine (observing liturgical seasons, giving them opportunities to learn and practice traditions—lent, advent, praying the rosary, having regular Masses, opportunities for Confession). They should be guided on many moral issues we all face which we face: Pre-marital sex, Co-habitation, abortion, same sex marriage, and the list goes on and on. Why are our Catholic schools not taking any clear stand against these moral issues and giving clear teaching to the children at school? LOVE for the Eucharist—if we believe that the Eucharist is the source and centre of our faith life, then we must show our Lord present in the Eucharist the love and reverence that He deserves. Can we hold Holy Hours, Processions during the feast of Corpus Christi, we must teach our children the Eucharistic hymns (go back to the basics), visits to the Blessed sacrament. Sadly, many people are not even familiar with the terms: Blessed sacrament, tabernacle, much less believe in the real presence of our Lord in the Eucharist, Again our actions—the importance we give to the Mass, the delicacy in preparation in everything pertaining to the liturgy. We need to learn how to be silent in Church—out of respect for our Lord present and for others who are trying to pray ... again we must teach all of these firstly by our own example and then by explaining.

Bishops and priests should focus foremost on the salvation of souls for eternal life, putting the Kingdom of God before all other concerns. Christ is the answer—preach Him and His Saving Truth! Bishops should help each parish priest in his diocese to foster reverence, the sense of the sacred and adoration of God in the celebration of the Eucharist, and of all the sacraments. Bishops and priests should be men of genuine prayer and submission to God's Will as God has made evident in Revelation, as contained in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. Bishops should focus on ensuring the fullness of the Catholic Faith is taught in all Catholic schools and educational institutions. This should include all sections of the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church' especially for Yr 9 and Yr 10 students, and in simplified ways for younger years. Sound doctrine allows genuine love of God to grow and a genuine personal relationship with Christ who is Truth itself. Parishes should include Faith formation for adults and youth that includes learning and understanding the four pillars of the Catechism so that each person can understand their faith and grow in their relationship with Christ. Sunday homilies should help connect parishioners directly with practical ways of how to grow in their spiritual life and how to avoid sin and going off track in one's spiritual life. It would be very helpful if parish level faith formation and also homilies would include specific explanations of how to live each of the Ten Commandments and what sins we should avoid in relation to each commandment, worded discreetly to be appropriate for children who are also present at Mass. Many adults fall away from their faith due to ignorance and also from being spiritually hungry and seeking to be spiritually fed in harmful places e.g. witchcraft and occult practices. If priests could speak more clearly on these things and show people the great riches of what the Catholic Church offers then so many people would be saved from the false allurements and spiritual dangers of these wayward paths. The same applies for all aspects of sexual morality. It would help people so much if the truth about these matters were preached about. Bishops should provide formation in seminaries and for current parish priests based in the philosophy and theology of St Thomas Aquinas and the works of great theologians such as Fr Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange O.P. If they did this the seminaries would soon be full and their vocations crisis resolved. This formation should also include fostering firm belief in the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Holy Eucharist, and offering Him adoration and reverence at Mass, in the reception of Holy Communion, and have frequent times of adoration of the Blessed sacrament. The formation should also include providing a solid theological understanding of the sacrament of Penance and urging all parishes to promote frequent reception of this sacrament and catechesis about its fruits.

We should be more forthright in voicing our concerns for those who have great need, those who often do not have a voice to speak for themselves. The marginalised, the poor, the homeless, asylum seekers, the sick, the lonely. People who have lost their way or lost hope need us to see them. God is not an exclusive, forbidding God: we are surely called to listen to those who have been pushed away by our closed doors, closed minds. Open, loving arms for our gay brothers and sisters: open, loving arms for our divorced brothers and sisters: and a Church which acknowledges and thrives using the intellectual and spiritual strength of its women. Not just at a local level, but throughout the whole Church.

- To be accepting of all people regardless of cultural heritage, ethnicity or sexuality, in the way Jesus would want us to be.
- To be a dignified religious body and not to turn people away from the idea of religion, but instead to evangelise other Australians.
- To take care of the members of the Catholic Church in Australia.
- To focus on growing the faith of the youth in Australia in a contemporary yet theologically sound manner.

I think God is allowing our faith to be seriously tested and asking us to remain steadfast in times of serious trial. I think He is asking each of us to deepen our faith through both an improved prayer life and an improved understanding of our faith. Some of the doctrines of the Church can seem difficult to justify in today's society. In particular, the Church's teachings on issues of marriage and family have become increasingly hard truths in a sexually liberalised and increasingly atheistic

society. External voices have become increasingly critical of the Church and its members—condemning us for being cold, uncompassionate and even evil for holding firm to the Church’s basic moral teachings. Sadly, this external pressure seems to have led to many within the Church, including many priests, buckling to that pressure. Acknowledging that the work of the Church and the evangelisation of the world is the work of all of Christ’s children, priests have a particularly important role to play. They are leaders in the Church and have a significant influence on the views of their flock, namely their parishioners. They also spent years in the seminary and are therefore responsible for understanding the tenets of our faith better than the average lay member of the Church. Sadly, it is my experience, that many priests (especially those over the age of about 65) express strange and at times heretical views from the pulpit at Sunday Mass. It is my grave fear that one of the reasons for this is that these priests think that we need to ‘move with the times’ and this sort of heretical behaviour will appear attractive to a younger audience who they assume have an appetite for wishy washy Catholicism and arbitrary moral teachings, especially on issues of sexual morality. This assumption is clearly unfounded and the average age of parishioners at parishes with priests such as this would suggest that the opposite is in fact the case. Young people, including myself, do not like or respect this lack of character, courage and moral conviction. Young people are looking for a leader. We are looking for someone to follow—someone to help us navigate an increasingly aggressive opposition to the Church and its teachings in secular society. I also find it alarming and conceited of many priests to invoke Pope Francis to justify their liberal views on issues such as gay marriage, female priests and abortion, when the Holy Father has explicitly confirmed and defended the Church’s teaching on each of these issues. [I have continued this answer in the next dialogue box]

I think God is asking us to radically change. I am inspired by all the Catholics who meet in their homes each week to live a deep spirituality and connectedness and who include people of other traditions to nourish their spiritual life when they meet. I think God is calling us to go past the fear of what should be banned and what gets an imprimatur. Let's grow up and be fearless of questions and exploring—trusting in the Holy Spirit. Let's ignore the rigid emphasis on preserving doctrine that historically and currently has not served us well. Let's be open to God's love guiding our actions.

No different to any other time in the past—to get to heaven by living a life of holiness; cultures and people may change but Jesus showed that you have to be of God's world not this one. *To be faithful to the truth. * To be better formed in the catechism. * To know clearly what Jesus teaches. * To renew our zeal for the Eucharist, to hold Eucharistic processions through the schools, streets, cities. * To build strong faith-filled communities. * To better support each other through every stage of life. * To have pre and post marriage support. * To have mentors for each stage of life. * To provide support for young families through family groups, talks, prayer groups, babysitting. * To have strong family traditions e.g. Sunday Mass weekly, rosaries, First Friday devotions, First Saturday devotions. * More welcoming at all parishes. * More admin support for priests and Religious so they can be more available to personally be present at community events. * To have Eucharistic adoration every day of the week and devote each day to a specific cause e.g. for vocations, for the Pope and the Church, for families, for the unborn, for the sick, for the holy souls in purgatory. * Support groups for those who are experiencing same sex attraction as well as their families—helping them to seek God’s call to true masculinity and femininity, that everyone is called to live chastely in accordance with God’s will. * Life is to be protected no matter what age and that all life comes from God. * Hold family conferences annually in each diocese to provide support for families at all stages of life. * To ensure that there are specifically trained, practising Catholics as specialist Religious Education teachers in all Catholic schools * To provide opportunity for students in Catholic schools daily Mass and regular confession, hear the Angelus bells ring. * To use the parish bulletin to transmit true Catholic teaching and links to good sites and books. * To make use of social media and multimedia (e.g. podcasts, vlogs etc.) to help the faithful access good Catholic formation regularly.

-Courage! Courage to speak the truth. Courage to proclaim Jesus as Christ to all. Courage for the Church and its members to tell its people what they need to hear, not what they think they want to hear. During a time where many seek direction, and light, we need the virtue of fortitude to state boldly the teachings of Christ, through His Church clearly, without sugar coating or people pleasing. We need to stay close to the Church and its teachings, rather than playing them down or adapting them to meet cultural needs or sensitivities. If we firmly believe in Jesus: the way truth and life, we should not stray from His very self, no matter how unpleasant our current world may find this.

-We as Catholics need a greater knowledge of Christ. I experience at many times, a dumbed down version of our faith, especially during some Sunday Masses. What is rich and deep and beautiful is watered down to the point where it loses all meaning. There is currently a great draw of people towards our eastern and Protestant brothers and sisters due to their ability to preach and challenge. Jesus' teachings were not always easy; our call to daily martyrdom is not always easy. Are we really being encouraged to take up our cross and follow Him? It sometimes seems that it is not so much that people are afraid of the challenge, but that our pastors are afraid of re-presenting to us the words of Christ, as they were. We need to relay Jesus as He is and go back to the source of our faith. We hear sermons every Sunday, sometimes with conviction, sometimes without, sometimes with an anecdotal story with a sweet moral, sometimes there's mention of the gospel, sometimes none ... we need to bring things back to the Father through Christ. Centre our words and deeds around the person and example of Christ, and do so both lovingly and passionately.

I believe God wants us to be: communities of prayer and love! Love for Our Blessed Lord, love for each other! Faithful to His teachings and nurture a love for His Church in our children and those around us.

As always, God asks that all of us be holy, responding to His love in the way we live our everyday life, seeking to grow in a loving, trusting relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, desiring to do His will in whatever circumstances arise and to love one another as He has loved us. God asks us to rely on His grace, and to:

- deepen our personal relationship with Jesus through prayer and by living a rich sacramental life, frequently receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Blessed Eucharist.
- make a sincere effort to acquire formation in the faith and sound doctrine, so as to have a properly formed conscience.
- ask pardon when we fail, realising our personal responsibility before God, and striving for continual personal conversion with trust in His forgiveness, and forgiving others in return.
- grow in our love for the Church, the Body of Christ, and for our spiritual and devotional heritage, in particular Marian devotions (especially the Rosary), Eucharistic worship, devotion to the saints etc.
- establish environments where we can nurture a sense of Catholic identity and cherish our religious heritage, in our parishes and prayer groups, in our Catholic schools and universities, youth groups etc.
- acquire a good understanding the social doctrine of the Church as a basis for living an ethical commitment to service to others and to society.
- seek to understand the ethical norms rooted in our human nature, applicable to all persons (irrespective of religious belief, or none) such as the right to life from conception to natural death, the nature of true marriage, and of the family as the building block of society etc.
- look for opportune ways to discuss these with people of goodwill, correcting common misunderstanding of human freedom, and not to shrink from civil discourse in the public square so as to bring Christ's love to our laws.
- take Christ to the world by the witness of our lives, supporting our friends in their difficulties in life or in faith, and reaching out to those on the peripheries who need our help.

In particular, God is also asking parents to:

<p>-live their vocation to holiness in their married life, each loving the other with their defects, in total self-giving and faithfulness.</p> <p>-strive to bring up their children well in the Catholic faith, help them to grow in a personal relationship with God through prayer, take them to the sacraments, train their wills and help them to acquire the human virtues in order to foster the supernatural virtues.</p> <p>-generously nurture the possible vocations when they see God may be calling their children to the priesthood or religious life, to apostolic celibacy or to marriage, while fully respecting their children's freedom.</p>
<p>That we create an engaging and inclusive community of faith. That our youth are embraced and supported to be part of the Church.</p>
<p>To love one another, but more than that. To put love in every action we do especially the ones we struggle with or the people we have difficulties with.</p>
<p>God is asking us to renew ourselves spiritually and to reform the way our parishes and other agencies engage the wider community. We are an affluent society and many of us, about half, feel we have no need for God, or at least the expression of God that they get from us as Christians. I think the best way to change this perception of Christians is to increase our work with those that have the least. This means that we should be putting the energy of our people and our agencies into the neediest areas. The early Christians reached out to the poor and we have great examples in St Francis of Assisi and St Vincent de Paul as examples of those that reached out to the poor and in more recent times we have lay people like Frederic Ozanam and Mother Theresa as exemplars of how to reach out to the poor. Unfortunately, while the Catholic Church in Australia is not a "prosperity" movement like some evangelical movements, there is a strong and possibly natural movement to being comfortable with how we are doing things. In a world that is increasingly consumerist, materialistic and egocentric, our leaders should be working us into a lather about the need to reach out to the poor in our community. We have politicians on both side of politics willing to demonise the unfortunate, those that have to rely on welfare, or that are unemployable, or that are seeking asylum, and unwilling to take the decisive steps needed to ensure that everyone has a decent living, somewhere to live, and good health care. We in the Church seem to have a cosy relationship with the wealthy and none at all with the poor. This is not to run down the great work of so many Catholic groups and agencies, such a Centacare, but these groups tend to employ professionals and don't have as a central mandate the engagement of the vast number of Catholics in their outreach.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to develop a deep personal relationship with Him. Everything else stems from, and is dependent on, this. The availability to spend time directly with God present in a Church where the blessed sacrament is reserved is a significant help. The availability of the 2 main regular sacraments—reconciliation and Eucharist, are also very important to nourish our spiritual life.</p>
<p>To continue to reach out to society and make the Catholic faith accessible to everyday individuals. To help and support individuals to be better Christians in everyday life. Suggestions for the Church would be to give the priest lessons on public speaking so homilies can be more thought provoking yet also more concise and relevant. It would also be good to her more topics that support marriage and families (Pro-life). I also suggest the Church invest more in making our churches a sanctuary/ places of beauty. Confession also needs to be encouraged and talked about more.</p>
<p>I think that God is asking bishops to listen closer to what their flocks have to say about how to encourage more young people back to the faith. Our local parish is one of God's waiting rooms with the bulk of parishioners being retirees. Young families and children are scarce on the ground. My own 22-year-old son has few of his generation to relate to. Whilst vocations are slowly improving it will be many years before we can rely on locally grown priests rather than having to rely on overseas imports. These are wonderful men but their understanding of our language leaves many homilies too hard to understand.</p>
<p>Hierarchy more humble, communicate, We need to be more welcoming</p>

To not be caught up so much in the materialistic world and to stand up more for our Catholic faith.
First—as individuals, second—as community, learning—learning, to really talk to God and "listen".
I think God is asking, demanding, that the clergy NOT sexually abuse children and young people. I think God is asking that children and young people be kept safe, for them to be PROTECTED from sexual abuse and abuse. I think God is asking, demanding, that clergy do NOT cover up crimes of child sexual abuse and abuse. I think God is asking for RESPECT of children and ZERO tolerance of child sexual abuse. I think God is asking for a NEW model of Church, for the laity and women to have greater involvement, even in decision making at high levels; for celibacy to be voluntary for priests; to open the priesthood up to married priests, former priests and women priests; for transparency and accountability in Church governance; and for clergy and Church leaders to radically call out injustices in the world, in our country, and our communities. I think God is calling the Catholic Church to lead the way.
The Christian message is one of fullness of life, of hope, of trust in God's love. This message is often not conveyed by the Church as currently constituted and operating in Australia. God is asking us to take a long, hard look at the current organization and structure of the Church, to remove what hinders the core message we preach, and constitute new structures and ways of operating that enhance the core message, not obscure it (or even worse, actively harm it).
To follow Jesus and not a set of rules. Jesus said, "Love your enemy." Augustine came up with a Just War theory in the Fourth Century. The Crusades occurred, the Inquisition occurred and we ventured too far from the words of the Gospel. Much more emphasis on joy! Paul talked about the joy of being a Christian and if anyone could talk about the misery of being a Christian, it was Paul!
Family Enrichment Australia (FEA) is a non-for-profit organisation, which runs courses for married couples and young professionals. FEA is affiliated with the International Federation for Family Development (IFFD) which supports over 7,000 volunteers in 66 countries with young professional, marriage and parenting courses. IFFD also has general consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and convenes the International Congress of the Family. FEA helps couples of all ages with marriage and parenting courses which focus on improving their problem solving skills in the day-to-day challenges that couples face both in their marriages and in their efforts to be good parents. Participants do not need to be Catholic to attend FEA courses as the concepts are common to anyone who is in a stable marriage and doing their best to raise their children to be happy, competent, responsible and generous adults. The courses have adopted the case study method, pioneered by Harvard Business School, and adapted it for family life. We believe that Catholic families in Australia, in fact the whole world, face an increasingly difficult environment where society's values and culture are very different, even hostile, to their own making lifelong commitment and character development in their children very difficult. Couples receive instruction on marriage and family life prior to their wedding, but after that they have very little formal education in this area so they are ill prepared for dealing with societal pressures and influences. In the past Catholic families may have been able to rely on advice from parents, prayer, Mass and the sacraments and all would be fine. These are very important, in fact essential, but today young parents also need to improve their skills and knowledge to work through the challenges they face in the family and society. Couples need to be able to talk through problems together through open communication, develop "game plans" to help their children grow in good habits and strength of character adapting their plans as the children grow. They need to be able to address societal challenges such as use of smart phones, social media, aggressively secular entertainment and media, pornography, unhealthy body image, inappropriate and pre-marital sexuality, pressures to limit number of children, just to name a few. We believe the Church needs to find ways to provide good solid education beyond just pre-marital preparation, supporting families not just through the initial "honeymoon period", but throughout their lives with young children, adolescents, and then adult children (and even grandchildren).

RECOMMENDATIONS The Plenary Council 1. A publicity campaign should be commenced to clearly explain that the Plenary Council cannot change Catholic Church teaching. This should be accompanied with clear teaching on subjects of confusion, particularly in relation to sexual morality. 2. In the interests of transparency the facilitator of the Plenary Council, [-], should confirm or deny the multiple reports that she supports homosexual marriage. If she does, she should be removed as facilitator of the Plenary Council. 3. Any person associated with the Plenary Council who rejects Catholic teaching should be removed from their position. The Catholic Church and the State 4. The Catholic Church should do all that it can to ensure that Christ the King is recognised by the states and the Commonwealth. 5. Catholic bishops must actively engage in commentary on political issues that endanger faith and morals. They must use clear language. This language is found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. 6. Catholic laity must engage in Catholic political action. 7. Politicians who claim to be Catholic who support gravely immoral laws must be repudiated in public. If they fail to correct themselves they should be excommunicated, denied the sacraments and prohibited from using Catholic facilities for their political causes. 8. A body must be established to pursue prioritised and coordinated Catholic political action across Australia. This body's purpose should include assisting Catholics to network within Australia's political institutions and to build pathways for well-educated Catholic youth to engage in Catholic political action. As a priority, it should defend the natural family unit and oppose laws that philosophically equate truth with error and endanger the ability of the Catholic Church to operate freely in Australia. 9. The Catholic Church must also develop strategies that provide tangible support to lay Catholics facing persecution for their support of Catholic teaching, particularly in relation to marriage, family and morality. Catholic Education 10. Parents of students at Catholic schools should be given instruction in the Catholic faith. Consideration should be given to real and tangible methods to ensure parents do so, such as fee reductions for parents who undertake and pass such instruction courses. 11. Dioceses should prioritise a limited and sustainable number of school communities for implementation of a wholly Catholic education program designed to ensure students live the faith and continue to do so after graduation. 12. Catholic parents in each diocese should be informed of these schools so that they can make informed enrolment decisions for their children. 13. These programs should be progressively rolled out, on a sustainable basis, to every school in a diocese. 14. Teachers at Catholic schools should be required to demonstrate that they understand the Catholic faith and Catholic schools should progressively aim to hire tea...

God is asking us to be a loving community first and foremost. We sacramentalise our children and then they leave. The sacraments and Mass should come last. People need to be welcomed, to want to come and to feel they belong. They need to desire a closer relationship with God and it is only then that they can truly understand what they are committing to—it is only then when they seek more that they are ready and our Church will grow. Start with playgroup, morning tea, sports groups, cafes and playgrounds—they'll come and then they will want to know more.

God is asking us to be Church, Godly, compassionate, involving, inviting. Asking for bishops and priests to serve, be humble, listening, not autocratic and rigid, sensitive to the concerns of the faithful. For example, in contrast with the widespread legalistic, non-empathetic, uncompassionate Church responses to the Cardinal Pell's conviction. Even not even mentioning it in [-] homilies on the Sunday after the guilty verdict—when people's faith is being so severely challenged. The 'Church' seems to come across as aloof and uncaring in the face of a severe damage. Damage wrought over decades by child abusing priests and bishops—looking the other way and appearing to do nothing. Keeping victims quiet, Resulting in a toxic culture in a hierarchical, authoritative structure. God is asking for reformation, renewal and return to the kind of leadership that Jesus called for—for Church leaders to serve, not from on high, but with love, humility, compassion, in faith and deed (aka 'concrete' action (as Pope Francis called for, in vain, it seems). We are called to be people of God led not by legalistic, self-interest and limp action, but by the Holy Spirit. Remembering that Jesus gave this 'millstone' warning: 'as long as you do this to the least of my brethren, you do it to me'.

The Church must openly confront the child abuse crisis. The Church must take proactive measures to: a) provide redress and healing to victims/survivors, b) implement the recommendations of the TJHC and Royal Commission as a matter of urgency and highest priority (e.g. within the next 6 months), c) reform and promote its safeguarding policies/practices. These measures are the responsibility of all clergy and parishioners, not just the Church hierarchy. They must be seen to be done in all parishes and in the public media. With recent events, the Church in Australia is at a tipping point—if we do not seize the opportunity to reform/revive then the Church will lose all its credibility and become irrelevant and dead within the 5 years.

To be beacons for truth as revealed in the Gospels. To hold true to our Catholic teachings and reject the activism (in and outside the Church) of those who seek to change the Church. The Church of the future will be a smaller Church but it will be a stronger Church. We should embrace that.

I believe God is asking us to trust him and keep and live by his ten commandments. I think God is not asking us to have woman priests. I believe God is also asking us to pray and fast when things are hard. I think God is asking us to pray for courage for our priests and religious people. God is asking us to not hide behind the sexual abuse cases and remove priests who are homosexual and posing danger to our children. I feel God is asking us to have children and support families who are having children. I feel God is telling us to preach about sin and have reverence in the Church and adore him in Adoration and spend time saying the Rosary.

God wants us to live according to Jesus' teachings and continue to bear witness to His message, living our lives with love, tolerance and respect, and simple kindness. That's all. All the unnecessary complexities of our Church are not God's wish but our human complications. I believe God wants us to figure out a way to live our lives in this complex world, according to Jesus' teachings but without all the man-made complications and hierarchy of the male dominated Church. The message of the Gospels is simple and it is this that we need to remember and adhere to, not the complicated system of rules and meaningless ritual that has somehow become a routine in itself, and a Massive distraction from the core teachings of Jesus. He wants us to treat each other with honesty and fairness in ALL things and at all times, not just in words but in our everyday actions and interactions with others. I truly believe that God wants men and women to be equal, and that women can contribute enormously to our faith community in ways that are currently only considered the domain of men. I believe God is asking us to accept women in positions of power in the Church and to receive full ordination if this is their vocation. God has no desire to restrict women in their devotion to Him. In addition, I believe God wants us to treat everyone with dignity and courtesy, recognising our human reality and the strengths and weaknesses that each individual brings to their life. In this respect priests should have the freedom to marry and celibacy should be a choice not a requirement. God is asking us to be authentic in our lives, to live His values and support each other with honesty and being able to trust each other.

To listen to and accept one another, wherever we are all at on our faith journeys. To support the less fortunate, marginalised and most vulnerable in our communities, to feed and house the homeless.

God is calling us to be a humble, inclusive, transformative community of disciples of Jesus, focused on making God's reign present on earth as it is in heaven. It is time for honest, critical, collective self-reflection, conversion, and work towards renewed institutional processes, practices and structures that can more authentically reflect and announce the Gospel. The Spirit is stirring up among the faithful, and indeed all people of good will, a yearning for authentic, transparent and accountable leadership in the Church that reflects the equal dignity of all persons. What is needed goes beyond adding a few more women and people of colour to advisory bodies. We need ways of making decisions and structures for leadership and accountability that recognise, uphold and embody the equal dignity of all persons. God is calling us to be less self-referential and

more outward-focused, to be less concerned about fine points of orthodoxy and more concerned about authentic Christian living in and for the world.
First, to return to the core teachings of Christ and place them ahead of institutional rules. It is the strict adherence to Church rules without exception and an unwillingness to see how that can gravely damage the Church that has caused much of problems the institutional Church faces today, particularly with regard to the abuse scandal. Christ was very firm in rejecting the Pharisees strict adherence to the 'law' when it did not accord with the universal truth of God's unconditional love and mercy (Mt 12:1-14, Mt 5:38-39; Jn 8:1-11). Second, to broaden Church leadership to include women religious and lay representatives, which will necessarily improve Church governance and make the institutional Church closer to the lay members. Despite their prominence in the life of Christ, women in particular have been neglected in the institutional Church—female vocations are doing worse than male vocations.
God is calling us to return to the traditional way of the Church. The evidence of this is clear, especially amongst the youth, with Traditional Latin Mass parishes swelling in number compared to their modern counterparts whose numbers are dwindling, to say the least.
We need a Church today that is relevant and loving that builds community and that reflects equality and inclusivity. (Please see attached files.)
God is asking of us today to be a Jesus community, a community which loves, care, and welcomes all without discrimination. The Gospels stories are full of examples of how Jesus wants us to live our lives. Jesus does not discriminate against women, if fact he goes out of his way to interact with women because he recognises the strength of their faith, even though many of the women were outcasts in their communities. Jesus is telling us, he does not discriminate he includes all, lepers, blind men, men taken over by demons etc. The laity has a lot to offer, we are the Church too not some amorphous group waiting for direction from a hierarchical male structure so often out of touch with Jesus, whose message is about love.
Being Christ-like in the world.
Honesty, transparency, accountability, and humility.
1. Hold fast to our faith in a secular world suspicious of Catholicism. 2. Fight a good fight, finish the race—i.e. we need to do more 'apologetics' in the community by, a)... showing the good works that Catholics do—charities, schools, international charities, hospitals, etc., b)... present the virtues that Catholics aspire to (and unfortunately some fail in this esp. some priests), c)... but give hard data that the majority are good, d)... be more active in social media—it is both a blessing and scourge of modern society—when 'everyone as a voice' but not necessarily a well-thought out voice, e)....be a source of info and guidance to the many tourists, migrants and students from China who don't know about the faith. We can reach 1.4 billion via the 1.8 million visitors and migrants every year from China.
Faith Building / Building Community.
Better communication within our Church structure, e.g. homily, deacons, scripture teachings.
Our Church needs to become human admitting that we make mistakes... Wipe out clericalism (power of bishops and priests) in accordance with our Pope's direct wishes...Employ Women in big decision-making structures. Help all to be equal.
God is asking us to look at our failures, proclaim our sorrow publicly, change into a humble needy Church. Our most glaring failure is to continue to be a clerical Church... Pope Francis has been urging us wipe Clericalism 'from our Church... Clericalism'. Means the power of priests and bishops. They are not superior human beings. They are equal in every aspect to the laity, except in their calling in life. We all have a different vocation, none better than the other if it is from God. Unfortunately for bishops and priests, over the centuries they have been placed on pedestals. This is unjust and unhealthy for the whole Church. Christ made us equal, with different roles... Until this is rectified, our Church cannot flourish, because it is going against the will of God as expressed in scripture. We need to admit we make mistakes, which in all humility needs to be corrected.

Then the Church may become part of the human race, and perhaps be more attractive to our younger folk ... Let us look to include all, old, young, unusual, weak, opponents, do- gooders especially the sick and starving. Let us not pray for sinners, but for yourselves... Thank you.
Investing in children and youth and change to our clergy/bishops.
I love going to our local parish for Sunday Holy Mass and the youth pray the Holy Rosary before Mass. I would love to see this happening in more churches (even a decade prayed) before Mass. Thank you for your consideration. Warm regards, [-]
I must say I don't really think in terms of what 'God is asking of us' but 'what we should be asking of ourselves'. Perhaps it is the same question, just couched in more secular terms. I was notified only today that this is the last day to make an online submission, so it is a cursory, rushed effort. I had a very powerful Catholic upbringing, was active at Sydney Uni in the Newman Society, and theological and practical issues to do with Catholicism remain central to my life. At the same time, having moved to [-] in 2000 for work, I have not been attending Mass regularly. Prior to that I did attend regularly at Fr [-]'s parish at [-] and often at [-]. My outlook would be typical of many of my background. I am appalled at the stance of the Vatican on women's ordination and the opposition to married priests. This has gutted the talent pool of the clergy in my lifetime. I do think the root problems of the Church however go much deeper than the two issues I have mentioned, or issues like child sexual abuse. The fundamental problem, shared by other Christian denominations, is the way we conceive of God. We must somehow integrate some concept of God that does not offend our ever-growing knowledge of the world drawn from modern science and the search for truth in general. People with analytical minds will not switch on to Catholicism, or other branches of Christianity, or indeed other religions, if they deep down feel their secular ways of thinking are being violated in ways that amount to 'intellectual dishonesty', or violations of intellectual conscience. I don't pretend for one moment the task of reconciling the Christian tradition with the discoveries and mindsets of western modernity is easy, or even achievable, but the attempt must continue to be made. This is so, not least because there is much that is anti-human and anti-good about the secular forces shaping the contemporary world (as has always been the case). The world needs many of the traits associated with Christian humanism and the best elements of historical Catholicism.
To be Saints! To place our total trust in God. To not be tempted by our modern world that tells us that the material and a focus on self at the expense of others or Truth will gain us happiness. God is asking us not to place our faith in that which is temporary and offers worldly, momentary pleasures and gains. God offers us His unconditional love and true happiness. God is asking us to persevere, be strong missionary disciples, unafraid of the backlash from our society and media. God desires us to stay faithful to the Church's teachings particularly in regards to the human dignity and morality. God is asking that we stand up for truth, beauty and goodness. That human life is respected and that as Catholics we are a joyful, prayerful people who walk the talk. God wishes us to be open to His Spirit so that we may follow His will, and so that those around us will witness God in us and be inspired to follow Christ.
To be a voice for those that are marginalised and speak truth into the world. To be an avenue for people to come and know Jesus Christ.
To pray so we can have a personal relationship with God built on friendship and trust. To help families nurture the vocations of their children, realising it is a blessing. We can't experience God's love if we don't have a happy home. Even better sacramental preparation, especially marriage courses that educate couples about the call to holiness in marriage and parenting. Warm Catholic Communities who welcome the priests of their parish and new parishioners through genuine friendship. Many people have commented on the joy of having their bishop very close to them and taking on a fatherly, pastoral role. Greater sense of Christian identity and mission. We are all called to holiness, service and faithfulness to the Church and to all people. Better religious and moral formation of young people, especially Religion teachers in Catholic Education. Better formation and support for seminarians and priests: holy priests will have holy flocks.

Nothing different from what he asked us when He founded our Holy Church. To remain faithful to His teachings and the teachings upheld by the Magisterium of His Church. All that is clearly stated in the Catechism. To live a life of holiness. He is asking us not to be tempted to follow the false and empty promises of our Godless world. He is asking us not to be fooled by false teaching and the stupidity of modern thinkers and political correctness. To be leading a life of prayer and fasting to attend Mass regularly and lead a sacramental life to evangelise the world and make disciples to support parish and community life to support religious vocations which are a direct result of faithful Catholic teaching, living and witnessing in Catholic marriages, schools, parishes, Catholic communities and families. God is asking us to clean up Catholic schools that have failed to teach the truth and beauty of the Catholic faith. To offer decent and faithful marriage preparation. Family and Marriage—There are marriage and baptismal prep and then nothing until Holy Communion—good to have family engagement at every point in family life. Marriage prep—deeper more practical Support and formation for families at every stage but especially those with young children. Perhaps have family mentors i.e. older couples to mentor and support younger couples physically, socially and emotionally. Hold family festivals annually with good speakers at all levels. Encourage family and parish devotions: The rosary, Exposition, Benediction, Eucharistic processions. Schools Provide PD for staff in true Catholic teaching—Teach Catholic values in all subject areas. Provide vibrant visiting speakers to inform and form school students so they can make good decisions. That Catholic schools are faithful to their mission. Specialist teachers to teach religion (rather than sport or art). Strong doctrinal focus in Religion instruction. Weekly Mass and regular confession—Wonderful seeing children at a class Mass. So lovely to hear the angelus bells and children say the angelus in schools. Catechesis for everyone no matter the age. People will love what they understand. To have continuing and strong formation from an early age to adulthood. For priests to teach the people true Catholic teaching—people like to be clear on what is right or wrong. To use the parish bulletin to transmit true Catholic teaching and links to good sites and good books.

Strengthen protect and support family through courses, marriage preparation, homilies reflecting traditional family values and instruction of the Faithful on the why and meaning of the parts of the Mass. Teaching us how to pray and how to live our Faith in the busyness of life and important to have sense of community. Privacy of Confession a must. Support our priests as they have such a big workload and need support from us all. We need Relevant and concise homilies so we can take away 2 or 3 points to consider during the week.

Since the Protestant Reformation, thousands of Christian churches have sprung up with various compromises on the original teachings of Christ. There is no longer in them any central teaching authority in that the primacy and infallibility of the Pope as the Vicar of Christ in matters of faith and morals was set aside. Hence, we have instead a huge multitude and variety of often contradictory personal interpretations and opinions as to what and how it is necessary to believe and act to follow Christ faithfully and to achieve eternal life with Him. The Catholic Church has a duty to pass on the Truth entrusted by Christ to His Apostles, to faithfully transmit the deposit of Faith. Other Christian churches have compromised with “modernity” on many core moral issues only to see their congregations shrink still further...Contraception, abortion, IVF, embryonic stem cell experimentation as well as divorce and remarriage, same sex “marriage” all contravene the teachings of Christ but this is sadly not reflected in many Protestant congregations nor are the teachings of Christ on these issues clearly upheld by some Catholic priests and Religious either, leading to great confusion and a sense that “anything goes,” if I’m ok with it. The concept of having an informed conscience is largely ignored. HOMILIES Where some of these “hard teachings” may be difficult for some priests to tackle effectively and convincingly in a homily why not have from time to time an audio-visual presentation instead given by a gifted and persuasive homilist who makes the Gospel relevant to everyday life but doesn’t shy away from the difficult subjects challenging the congregation at various times nor deprive them of an authentic Catholic response. Like our detractors let’s also use the modern means of communication more effectively

to inform and support our congregations with effective spokesmen and women to clearly and charitably present Church teaching in a way that makes it clear that following Christ faithfully is not always easy but is the secret to a happy life here on earth and most importantly it is the way to be with Him forever in eternity. As Pope Benedict said, "Every Christian is bound to confront his own convictions continually with the teachings of the Gospel and of the Church's Tradition in the effort to remain faithful to the word of Christ, even when it is demanding and, humanly speaking, hard to understand. We must not yield to the temptation of relativism or of a subjectivist and selective interpretation of Sacred Scripture. Only the whole truth can open us to adherence to Christ, dead and risen for our salvation. Christ says: "If you love me ... " Faith does not just mean accepting a certain number of abstract truths about the mysteries of God, of man, of life and death, of future realities. Faith consists in an intimate relationship with Christ, a relationship based on love of him who loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4:11), even to the total offering of himself."
Helping the faithful find their way to God. Supporting them in their journey to Christ and bringing the sacraments to life. Bringing the Word to the world, with courage.
1. To proclaim the gospel. 2. To share Christ with others. 3. To help the marginalised. 4. To share our faith by the life we live. 5. To share our Charism. 6. For families to rise up to boldly live the gospel. 7. To raise our children to be faithful to Christ's teachings.
To address the issues of marginalisation.
1. Protect and strengthen the family through support for married couples, parenting courses, homilies, marriage preparation course for people getting married. 2. Encourage more youth to attend Church and through evangelisation, teaching them to pray and developing friendships within the community. 3. Educate and encourage traditional Catholic practices such as novenas, rosary crusades, Eucharistic hour. 4. Better support for priests—in terms of the workload, preparing relevant homilies that relate to current issues and send a positive uplifting message about our faith, support to avoid temptations. 5. Preserve the privacy of confession. I also believe we need to help those are on the outskirts of the Church, who grow up with little formation and grow up with little understanding of why we do what we do. Keeping the Mass and the Church as truly Sacred place, ensuring that we aren't so casual about attending and acting in a manner that is appropriate within the Church. There may need to be a greater sense of reverence and seriousness, coming from an understanding of the reality of Christ's presence with us.
Autocratic leadership of most bishops; lack of recognition of criminality with paedophiles; lack of sincerity in dealing with victims of abuse—need change in leadership approach as it doesn't reflect Gospel values.
For the Church to move forward, leadership should include lay people, together with bishops and other clergy and they should be included in decision making
To stop the decline and shrinkage of the Church which appears to be (make the Church great again). To overcome the pain and frustration, caused by the institution of the Church by the recent findings of the Royal Commission into sexual child abuse.
Make Christ's message, with the help of the Holy Ghost, relevant for all especially the young.
God is shocked at our Australian bishops/Church for lack of true leadership; lack of accountability; lack of driving, profiting and actioning on the key societal issues facing Australia.
To educate people on the importance of Jesus message by making it relevant to today's society.
The need for our doctrines to change.
The importance of the Church getting in touch with today.
The importance of improving and developing relationships with existing parishioners and the known and unknown communities.
God is asking us in Australia to persevere more throughout these challenging times. We can see now children of God are tortured by media, etc.
I think God is asking us to renew our devotion to the sacraments, particularly reconciliation and communion. Having confession more widely available and easily accessible within parishes would allow for parishioners to foster a deeper relationship with Christ and to pick themselves quickly

from a fall. As a young person, I can definitely say that being able to easily get to confession and receive forgiveness of my sins, as well as spiritual formation through my school community has been a huge help for me in my Catholic journey and I think that it would be a huge benefit to the parish communities as well. A renewed devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist goes hand in hand with this. I know that I have benefited from being able to spend time in adoration in front of The Blessed sacrament and to be able to receive Him in The Eucharist daily and making our parishes places where this is easily accomplished would help many grow closer to Christ. Even things as simple as encouraging parishioners to observe silence in Church before and after Mass to allow those who wish to pray would aid greatly in this along with regular Adoration.

To be a place where all are welcome. To be a community where faith in God is evident and where the community comes together formally and informally to celebrate God's love. To be a place of generosity and openness, not of closed doors and exclusion. To be a place looking forward not backwards at outdated traditions and practices.

We need to better articulate why certain behaviours are wrong and find a way of dialoguing with people with different values in a way that is not confrontational but does not compromise our values. We need to inspire people to connect with God and not be put off by their disappointment in many of the ordained ministers. We need to better educate our ordained ministers and give them more life experience so that lay people are more willing to listen to them. We need to recognise that lay people are generally well educated in secular matters and have the capacity to be well educated in religious matters. We need to re-examine Church governance. Does all political power need to reside with ordained ministers? We need to re-examine priestly celibacy and permit married clergy. We need to remove from ordained ministry those who preach one thing and do another in secret. We need to become less dependent on overseas priests, given the obvious language and cultural problems. Perhaps there is a role for part-time ordained ministers or for ministers who only take vows for limited periods of time. Ordained ministers need to lead by example and spend less time backstabbing each other and trying to minimise what they do.

I think that God is asking us to maintain our faith in an increasingly secular world. There is also a strong anti-Christian and particularly anti Catholic feeling that is becoming pervasive in mainstream Australian culture which we need to stand up to and try to dispel whenever possible.

I think God is asking us to keep the Church faithful to the Pope and faithful to the gospels. I think we need to continue to teach the truths that have been safely passed down to us through the centuries. The Catholic Church is the Church founded by Christ. We must continue to proclaim and teach the truths and love of God despite the unpopularity of this. The Church is not here to please the Masses or to try to be popular or "with it". The Church is a beacon of truth, morals and a rock in the modern world. It is the home of the 7 sacraments, and it continuously points the way to live a good and Holy life and to get to heaven through Mary and especially through the Mass and the Holy Eucharist. In Australia, the media delight in publicly shaming and parading the priests and religious who have committed unlawful and immoral acts. The reason there is such a fuss raised is because of the Catholic Church's beautiful and holy history and example. The media are desperate to try to undermine the Church's moral authority and teachings. The fact that the Catholic Church is targeted more than any other organisation shows that it is doing a lot of things right! The media are happy to show the disgrace and shame of a small number of priests but fail to show the wonderful and holy work of the vast majority of the priests and religious. (I talk about Cardinal Pell, whom I believe innocent, in the next question) So I think the Church needs to stand firm in its teachings, stay true to the Pope, stay true to Church traditions. Yes, priests who commit crimes need to face justice, but the Church needs to stay firm and not pander to the media. In other words women priests, or breaking the seal of the Confessional should never be considered. The media are not trying to help the Church be more popular, they are trying to silence the only institution left which calls out their immorality and sins. The media, which speak for a large number of the population, would like to silence the Church like Herodias, Herod's wife who wanted to silence St John the Baptist. But the Church is not here to be popular or to echo the

views of the general public, it is here as the light of truth, the moral teacher, the guide for the people of God.
1. To help everyone, especially our youth—know how much God loves them—that they are loved unconditionally—that God is their father. 2. To give everyone, especially our youth, a road map for how to live—and if they choose to veer from this road they have the tools and knowledge to get back onto it.
God is asking the Church in Australia the same thing He has been asking from us from the beginning: not to forget that its primary mission is to lead and guide its faithful to live with their heart set on God—To teach us to love God. Only when we have possessed His love could we truly love and serve others generously. So I believe the Church in Australia must: 1) teach the fundamentals of the Catholic faith boldly, clearly, unadulterated in each parish based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. 2) Deepen further the understanding and love for the sacraments specially the Eucharist as the greatest gift of God to us. Equally important is the full appreciation of God's mercy in the sacrament of Reconciliation. 3) Make reception of the sacraments easily available. 3) Teach us to pray through regular Exposition of the Blessed sacrament, retreats, meditation and talks.
The Catholic Church in Australia is at a critical juncture in its short history. As Australian society edges further away from God towards a Godless state, the Church faces an uphill battle to re-evangelise the modern world. However, rather than running away from this difficult challenge, it is undoubtedly true that society and its citizens, more than ever before, need to experience for themselves the freedom that comes from encountering the transcendentals of truth, beauty and goodness. The Church, as the beacon of truth in the world, must joyfully proclaim the Good News of the Gospel as instructed by Jesus Christ. It must firstly instruct the faithful in order for them to be bearers of the good news. The Australian bishops must facilitate in catechising the lay faithful in both matters of faith and of morals. They must uphold the importance of living out the faith within the context of family life and to enable schools to holistically educate Catholic school students within the venerable tradition of Catholic intellectualism. Furthermore, the Church must do more to uphold truth in the public sphere. The Australian bishops must unapologetically defend and reaffirm the Church's perennial teaching on marriage and sexuality, and on life, defending the inviolable right to life of human beings from conception until natural death. The Church, in preserving the richness of Her traditions, must promote objective beauty within a society that is distinctly unbeautiful. The Australian bishops must do all it can to encourage greater reverence in the liturgy through promoting the use of Latin and <i>ad orientem</i> worship amongst others. They must uphold the rightful place of chant as specially suited towards the Roman Rite of the Mass, further the cause of music education in which the treasures of sacred music can be preserved and passed down to future generations. The bishops must also foster a greater devotion amongst the faithful to the public recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours—the public prayer of the Church—and champion greater devotion towards Eucharistic adoration.
To return to the core message of faith, to know, love and serve Our Lord Jesus Christ with all our heart, mind, body and soul so that we can live with him forever in the full Beatific vision in Heaven. As the generation who grew up without being formed in the faith, when Catholic schools showed us contraceptive devices instead of teaching us St Paul VI's document, <i>Humanae Vitae</i> on why to wait to have a baby in the confines of a Catholic marriage steeped in the grace of God, to practice Chastity and abstinence we are a lost generation. Our parents sat and pondered the failure of our Catholic schools to pass on the faith. Close the Catholic Schools until the teachers are formed in the practice of the faith, keeping holy the Sabbath day, attending Sunday Mass, welcoming children into their own families instead of asking "Are they all yours?" Our teachers all need to read "Educating in Christ" by Dr Gerard O'Shea. A book produced by a former Catholic principle who is now tasked with turning around the Religious formation programme of the Wilcannia Forbes diocese for Catholic education. As a father of 5, he happily tells everyone, all his 5 adult children practice the faith, attending weekly Mass and having an active prayer life. We

need to have Catechesis of the Good Shepherd in every parish, diocese or where the need to catechize children starting from the age of 3 years up to 12 years when they become Soldiers of Christ at the sacrament of Confirmation. 4 young graduates from [-] COGS are studying for priestly and religious life, one at [-], [-], one in the [-] fathers and 2 as Monks in the newly formed [-] Priory in [-]. We need to form good and Holy priests which requires our priesthood and seminaries to be cleaned out of the Homosexual element that infiltrated the priesthood, the Australian seminaries in the 1970's 1980's and 1990's onwards. As parents we need to see that systematic causes of child abuse have been cleaned up, homosexual, paedophile and sexually unstable priests are cleaned out of the priesthood. Our bishops must be accountable for their own actions too. Perpetual Adoration is producing vocations. At Least 6 have come from [-] parish, [-] who have each been formed at this parish. The grace of Adoration flows through to many, priests, young men, families and the wider society. The parents of two monks in formation in [-] Priory, [-] are heavily involved in [-] in Perpetual Adoration in [-], [-], [-]. As we discover our faith, what the Mass is about we are being drawn to the Extraordinary form of Mass, the silence in the Canon, bells ringing at the moment of elevation, heavenly music bringing us all to the ecstatic joy of the closest place we can get to Heaven on earth. 30 vocations to various orders of priests and religious approximately have gone through [-], [-], [-]. So few of us know the Bible, souls are being lost.

To return to holy Masses with beautiful music that have periods of silence so we may be drawn closer to Jesus Christ truly crucified and resurrected and present in the Holy Eucharist.

To become an organisation that Christians can be proud of. Unite the Christian Faith. Recognise the Massive failings of the current system and make significant changes For The Church to be a conduit for the delivery of the Christian philosophy and give up some of its dogmatic protocols. Ensure all priests receive ongoing training, assistance in the delivery of a clear inspirational homily. Even if this means giving them pre-prepared sermons.

To reconnect to the most fundamental calling of our faith—to love God and our neighbour. Love of God. For some people, attendance at Sunday Mass is already in itself an heroic effort as they need to fight against the social climate and sometimes family pressure and other serious obstacles even to maintain this most basic aspect of practicing the faith. However, attendance at Sunday Mass is too often seen as the pinnacle rather than the beginning of the spiritual life. Whilst recognising that each person needs to be met where they are, for many a gentle push is needed to develop a fuller spiritual life, followed up by some basic instruction that may need to fill gaps in the very basics of practice of the faith that would not have existed a generation ago:—How do I pray?—Where do I even begin with reading the Bible?—Why is the Mass so important?—How can I better understand the teachings of the Church?—How do I get help and direction? To reach a broad cross section of society it may be necessary to use multiple channels to reach people:—targeted homilies with a gentle call to action—small groups and talks on targeted topics—parish newsletters—website material—posters and other material (including books and CDs) made available in the Church. Modern technology would make this relatively easy to do with a small core of quality material that could be broadly distributed. Love of neighbour. There are already occurring a great number of acts of love of neighbour, big and small, both at an individual and collective group level, whether through a parish or another Church organisation, or by Catholics acting of their own initiative in their families and broader society. Again here, it would be helpful to receive gentle encouragement and a call to action for Catholics to live a greater service to others, firstly in the ordinary circumstances of family life and work or school. This love of neighbour should be (and often already is) patently obvious in parish life, but go beyond to serve others in the community. Some organised opportunity for charitable volunteer work in each parish may be helpful for those who wish to become involved but are lost as to where to begin.

It seems to me that one of the most tasks for the Church in Australia is to have an intense teaching of the faith at all levels: schools, parishes, etc. The Catechism of the Catholic Church is a

wonderful means of Evangelisation. According of St. Thomas Aquinas we can't love what we don't know and God's greatest enemy is ignorance. That could be the reason of the low level of faith in Australia. Religion teachers should be Catholics and not only teach doctrine but as well piety. Piety starting to the Eucharist and at schools. To know about the real presence of Christ in the tabernacle and to act accordingly: Visits, attending Mass devoutly, etc. A goal: to fill the churches, out of faith to the Blessed sacrament.
To be a servant of God, reach out and assist others who marginalised. To encourage others to find a sense of belonging in a faith community.
For each of us to find and follow His purpose in our lives and above all for each of us to have more commitment to being his witness. The Catholic Church is organised in parishes, and each parish should have commitments to make Church life more of an encompassing part of life. Otherwise what happens is that a minority come to a weekly Mass and after that just live outside the Church with no activity in it or contact with it. Apart from a primary school system and the catechetics arrangements in high schools, there is really not a lot on the go.
1. To include women in the clergy! Allow women to be priests and deacons! Men are not holier than women and Jesus broke the social norms of his day with interaction with women (Matt. 9:20; Luke 7:37; John 4:27). Jesus was a feminist of his day! To keep the Catholic clergy as exclusively a male vocation is so saddening to me as I highly doubt in the modern day Jesus would want this exclusion of his female followers. 2. Allow priests to marry. Our love of God comes first and the unconditional love Christians receive from God allows us to love other people. Also—might fix your paedo priest PR problems! 3. Change the songs to upbeat ones. 4. Change the tone of speaking in Church. I'm excited to be a Catholic. I want the speakers and priests to seem excited to share the word! No more monotone reading from the Bible.
Strengthen our practise as Christians through public worship and genuine assistance to the people seeking a loving relationship with Jesus. We need to reach people who are not inclined to attend established public worship.
[-] Catholic College [-] Plenary Council Question (Students in Year 7-12 2018 and Year 7 2019) 1. To help others more, especially those who need help but may never seek help it. Many marginalised groups were identified i.e. people who are homeless, underprivileged, farmers, refugees, small business, people living with mental illness, our relationships with our Indigenous Australians. 2. Protect the environment and to be careful with the earth's resources. 3. Pray more; Staff: 1. Being open to helping more organisations and causes and responding to present need and allowing the College to "...Become a place that has a bigger heart" 2. Need to spend more time listening to one another, "to spread joy" in order to become a more authentic Catholic community and embracing change where it needs to occur for the growth of the community. 3. Connecting with others through a compulsory service and giving a wider opportunity for all to participate. 4. Care for the environment.
I think God is asking us to discern about the current state of the Church in Australia as I feel it is in a crisis point.
We need a future Church in Australia where the faithful Catholics are serious about their faith. They should be eager to thoroughly inform themselves about their faith and started practicing the requirements of their faith. In my personal opinion I believe that we are not asked to reinvent the wheel. God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in His eternal Wisdom has provided us with the Holy Scriptures which are millennia old, yet still valid today. We should look at what the Church has received and has in its power. The Vatican Council II with the Constitution LUMEN GENTIUM of 21 November 1964 has given us a precious gift, a powerful tool: The Permanent Diaconate. Chapter 3: The Hierarchical Structure of the Church, paragraph 29 said: "the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy... this diaconate can, in the future, be conferred upon men of more mature age, even upon those living in the married state." Pope Paul VI the 18 June 1967 has provided us with the guidelines for it in his Motu Proprio: SACRUM DIACONATUS ORDINEM. where he said: "It {The Diaconate} is not to be considered .. /....

as a mere step towards the priesthood, but it is so adorned with its own indelible character and its own special grace so that those who are called to it can permanently serve the mysteries of Christ and the Church." Give then to the Deacons to administer parishes without priest. Relation with other Christians. We need also to be OPEN minded and show OPEN DOORS to all Christians. Ecumene in Greek language designated all humans of the earth; it translates into universe, universal. Ecumenism indicated unity of all Christians. Catholic means also universal. Let's be universal. Let all Christian be welcomed in our churches. Let the Protestants, and the Separated churches' members come to our churches and take the nourishment they feel in need to. We believe in the 7 sacraments. They are all Gifts from God, given us by Jesus. Other Christians may believe in only 3, 4 sacraments. Well if they want to receive these sacraments in the Catholic Church why deny them? Yet the Catholic Church must continue preaching the 7 sacraments, and the Catholic must keep cherishing them all as Gifts from God. The Dispensed priests should not be forgotten and kept at a distance. Keep them close. They may help sometimes and somehow. Convicted priests? They also are children of God. Do not abandon them.

Outwardly addressing social intolerance—Christians in unity going to Church an occasion that means something connecting with teenagers in the community getting back in touch using technology reflecting on other faiths—looking outwards music needs to be updated and inspiring look at what is successful in other faiths and incorporating if appropriate. Can Church meet us on occasions that matter to us. Society has issues around self-focus vs old fashioned community in the modern day—potential political role to play understand and listen to all. Education—what is the message and the relevance priests need to be understanding of family unit. Lack of compassion—protect the Church at the expense of the community. Change ways—Reconciliation and healing enliven the experience of Church. Schools are taking the place of the Church, parish life heavily dependent on who the local parish priest is, priests need more grounding in Australian issues to make homilies more accepting and engaging rituals and structure needs to change for the future. Female priests—Think beyond our own human timeline—environmental future. More action in the world. Mental health issues related to gay/lesbian not being able to talk about it in the Church context. Church as a body needs to change—to observe and listen and reflect and act upon current values. Primary school principals to run the parishes. To be an inclusive Church. To accept all people regardless of background. Turn our minds and hearts to him. Look beyond our borders. Encourage interfaith dialogue. Make Church more welcoming to all. Honesty. Better, more accessible teaching. Be relevant. Not feeling welcome, minority groups are excluded. Less institution, more community. Disconnected. More lay involvement in the Mass. Good governance. That we are not wasteful. Transparency. Reaching out to the marginalised. More modern music. Too many rules. God can be found not only through the Church. Doing not just talking. Sustainable practice. Acknowledge past mistakes. Continue to reach out to those in need. Talk about contraception. Justice for the abused. Modernize.

To the council members: May the Almighty God bless you, may the Holy Spirit overshadow you with wisdom and discernment, and may the Passion of Christ give you strength to fortitude to fulfil His most loving Will: We would like to submit you our prayers for the new evangelisation of Australia. HOMILY GIVEN AT MASS—CONCRETE AND PRACTICAL GOALS/ADVICE: Most of the faithful that attend Sunday Mass will receive the formation in the Catholic Church ONLY at this time. To make the formation useful and allow further contemplation OUTSIDE of the Mass time, the priest needs to be able to reach the lay faithful in MORE SPECIFIC ways/examples: Examples:—Specific PRACTICAL advice (CLEAR take home points to work on that week)—EXPLAIN THE SACRAMENTS (recap the sacraments especially the Mass and Confession—explaining them—confession is available not only for mortal or venial sins, but also areas of struggles and lacks of love. Grace is bestowed upon the penitent with the rectification of the intention to work harder in the areas of personal struggles. —Practical advice from the Gospel readings for the day. This advice needs to be CLEAR with PRACTICAL points. —Highlight the importance of REVERENCE in the Church (where the blessed sacrament is reserved) as well as DURING THE CONSECRATION—if

<p>the lay truly understand the importance of the MASS, we will benefit from the abundance of Graces available. Regrettably the current homilies are flowery and we don't take anything away from it. Our priests need help and RESOURCES (that have been proven effective—in passing on the Church's teachings) to them to be able to relay these PRACTICAL advice and knowledge. (Example, see the video on YouTube on "How do I go to confession" https://youtu.be/lb8pzvnnL20?t=25. We thank the Council for hearing our plea. Yours in Christ Dr [—] and Mrs [-]</p>
<p>The Church of 2020 needs to enter generously into reconciliation with Australia's First People. To care for and sustain life in our fragile environment. To become an advocate and support for those in need, particularly refugees. To reconcile lovingly and practically with victims of child abuse and their families. To become a Church that reflects humility and transparency in its efforts to govern with broader participation, collaboration, and expert financial management. To be healed of the hurts brought about through clericalism and be allowed to experience the promises made by the Vatican Council II that ALL its members are equal by our baptismal consecration to serve the world as Christ's community of disciples. To move forward and give energy to a revival of a renewed Church rather than retreat and find comfort in dogma and old structures. To be outward looking with its "doors wide open" to the issues of our day—the problems of homelessness across all age groups, support for refugees, compassion for those whose marriages have irrevocably broken down—and to minister to people where they are within their circumstances rather than only when they conform to our structures or out-of-touch criteria (e.g. the huge rejection of the Church's stance on birth control). To bring the gift of adult spiritual maturity to the Australian community, which can best be expressed by our freely choosing to honour and serve God in one another whose temples we have become.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to move with the times as it is clear the Church is not working the way it is. Most rules in our Church are man-made. Jesus did not say no married priests, no women priests. We currently pray for vocations when vocations are crying out for married priests, women priests.</p>
<p>It seems to me that there is great loss to us the Church in the coldness of our response immediately after the Commission into Sexual Abuse in Australia. A liturgy or two hid all the grief and deep hurt that is still festering. "Because we have neglected the lament pieces, we are ill-equipped for the loss that we are facing in our society" writes Walter Brueggemann (2018). In consumer capitalism we just don't have any brokenness and go on acknowledging prosperity and success. The whole business of Lamentations as in the Book of Psalms or Jeremiah's writings is not in our way of time spent well in apologizing in much song and psalm to our Great God. Walter Brueggemann writes well in On Being. If we walk the road of consumerism we will know even more anxiety producing issues as huge disruptions are faced with no faith. Quite well-written Liturgies of Lamentations are found and prayed in the American Church. Where are our prophetic voices? https://onbeing.org/programs/walter-brueggemann-the-prophetic-imagination-dec2018/?utm_source=On+Being+Newsletter&utm_campaign=a6....</p>
<p>—Parents praying with children is an expectation, but we haven't skilled our parents on how to do this. How do you help people to pray with their kids, such as tools; space for kids to be in a relationship with God.</p> <p>—Marriage preparation—having a consistent message.</p> <p>—Governance of the Church—hierarchy needs to look at success stories in Catholic healthcare, but on clerical side more women in hierarchical. Increased public leadership of women in the Church. In the decision making of the plenary council, there will be no woman's voice.</p> <p>—Make the Mass structure more modern, open to people that have never been to Mass before, so that meaningful relationships can be formed.</p>
<p>To understand and learn more about the importance of devotion to the Blessed Mother. As Frank Duff wrote "If Mary were but known". The importance of devotion to Mary is crucial for the Salvation of Souls. If we get this right then Mary would ensure our relationship with Jesus was healthy and perseverance in remaining faithful to the teachings of the Church. The majority of</p>

Catholics are frightened to understand Mary and believe that this would take away devotion to her Son. It actually does the opposite it increases immensely. Mary is so left out because of the misunderstandings we have of the role God has allowed her to undertake. If you want renewal in the faith, if you want faithful Catholics, then introduce Mary to the world in the way that God wanted. The results will speak for themselves.

I believe God is asking the Church to concentrate on helping Australians to find the truth, Jesus Christ. At a time in history where people are being flooded with more information than ever before, the Church must preach a consistent, strong and unwavering message. Any attempts to dilute the truth have been met with unequivocal failure, a fact attested to by the dwindling numbers at Mass each Sunday. As the Church in Australia has attempted to broaden its appeal by shying away from preaching uncomfortable messages about the social teachings of the Church, more and more people are leaving the Church rather than joining it. A half-baked truth is of no value at all. The Scriptures reflect this clearly in the Book of Revelations when it is said "So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth." The Australian population are desperate for the truth, and they know that to find the truth is to be challenged. While tolerance and compassion will always be qualities necessary in the Church in Australia, the Church cannot preach that immoral lifestyles and acts are pleasing to Our Lord and can be pursued freely by His faithful. Such a message wins no new souls for Christ and indeed loses souls that otherwise may have been saved. The Australian youth particularly are being bombarded with social messages inconsistent with the teaching of the Church, at "safe schools" and on the internet especially. We must protect our young ones and not leave any room for confusion, particularly in our Catholic schools. As Christ Himself says in Matthew (18:6) "If anyone causes one of these little ones to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. He leaves very little room for doubt! We need a consistent, unified front in the fight for the souls of Australians. The Truth cannot be thrown to the wayside for the sake of presenting an appealing product. A Church that does not strictly conform with the teachings of Christ is of no use at all and has forgotten its mission. The Catholic Church has survived for over 2000 years by staying true to its central teachings, dogma and disciplines. We have had many stormy periods over two millennia, but we have survived and have never been bigger than we are today. Any attempt to steer a new course is as foolish as it is arrogant. Times may change, but Christ never does, and nor does human nature.

I believe He tells us what He wants of us in His book—the Bible I believe He has forestalled the end of this Age to let more people hear and respond to His message—the Gospel. I believe that message tells us how we went our own way, but Jesus died to allow us to come back to God, if only we would accept His invitation. I believe He wants us to spread that message of the invitation for forgiveness. If we saw a dying man and did nothing we would be rightly accused. We need to adopt that understanding for evangelism. I believe He wants us to both respond by being forgiving like His Son, Jesus. I believe the Church needs to be aware of the need to be both consistent to God's word, and to be attractive to outsiders. But never compromise our Lord's ways. I believe that we need to abhor abuse of any kind, especially to the vulnerable.

I believe God is asking for a greater need to love and know Him, in our neighbour and as God Himself, the Redeemer of all. I believe there is little true knowledge of Him and that more needs to be done about open public discussion about Jesus and Saviour—the reality of our lives and meaning and purpose. This needs to be done in a bold and frank way because our faith has been diluted and unsavoury aspects denied or omitted with catastrophic outcomes. The Truth needs to be proclaimed loudly!! Bishops, and laity need to proclaim it loudly unrelentingly. Apologetics needs to be taught in every parish! We need to get back to BASICS for young and old. It needs to be done at the parish level where education can be accessed by all because let's face it, very little sustenance of the gospel is provided to kids at school and adults leave school with a childlike understanding and go through life with poor maturation of their faith due to poor understanding

and development of the application of the gospel in their lives. In short, everyone especially the lay faithful (who are also ignorant of facts of the Catholic Church teaching) needs to be reinvigorated, awakened from slumber to the reality of God and meaning of our lives in the context of the whole of Gods plan and salvation. Education is the key and outspoken role models like Bishop Fulton Sheen! Why are we so afraid? Why not develop a Catholic TV channel in Australia? Speak the truth and it will defend itself- just watch it! Gods power can reach even the isolated and people who don't socialise or belong to a parish. Let's publish the comfort faith brings and in the invisible power of God available to all who have faith and love Him! Help people realise eternal life and love is for ALL who seek Him.
That the Church should be more inclusive at all levels and in particular that women should be encouraged to participate in decision making and governance. Obviously the question of the ordination of women is beyond the remit of the Plenary Council, but there are many ways that women can play a more significant role at both the parish and diocesan levels. They certainly do wonderful work now "at the coalface" (the overwhelming majority of CCD volunteers in my parish/deanery are women) but we don't see many in leadership roles.
To live like Jesus did. Help those around us, accept people as they are and help them the way they need help, to interpret the scriptures in the light of today, and to reach out to those who have been hurt by the Church institution.
I believe God is asking us to be more inclusive, it's not just about going to Mass, we need to make contact with people on a social level. We should not be one hour per week Catholics, our faith should be a part of our lives, we should be living it in our daily lives. A way of achieving that is through social contact and activities or events. Social contact can begin with those attending Mass through interesting events that might encourage invitations to friends, neighbours and colleagues, these events could be attractive enough to attract non-Catholics to join and be a part of the charisms of our faith.
Inclusion, really simple, we should be including everybody in all things we do.
For the last 50 years or so we have had a falling number of priests. I think the Holy Spirit is telling us that he doesn't like the criteria for priesthood or the model we have. I don't think we are listening. Perhaps God isn't inspiring young celibate men to serve because he doesn't want young celibate men. I believe the Holy Spirit is telling us to change the model to include both married men and also women. I see wonderful leadership from women in our Church. The current model of power down no longer speaks to Australian Catholics. Our congregations are falling and aging. My children see no relevance in Catholicism but have a belief in God. I think the Holy Spirit is talking to us though our young in areas of sexuality. I grew up in a time where homosexuality was considered a crime and also sinful. Science tells us that sexually is not as well defined as we once thought. God speaks to us through his creation. We aren't listening. With 7% of young men being gay our teaching are causing real harm to many young people who God has created gay. It isn't a choice.
Truth, Justice and Transparency on all fronts including topical events and guidance on controversial happenings in society. I would like the Holy Father to be more visible to us and to make statements regarding our faith as we are often criticised on many aspects of our faith, often without conveying a response to the world.
Christ's teachings are calling us to be more inclusive, more tolerant and open to social justice in all its aspects.
To cleanse the Church by providing regular and formal doctrinal formation to youth in schools (especially Catholic schools) so that future Australian Catholics understand the Faith and are not mislead by individuals with their own agendas. To strengthen the true meaning of family, by correcting priests and parishes who are preaching harmful ideologies that, for instance, agree with same sex marriage or are encouraging parishioners to make plenary submissions on their behalf. I have also seen priests encouraging parishioners to make submissions of restructuring the Mass and wanting female priests. If Catholic youth had a true doctrinal understanding, they would

not be swayed in the wrong directions. They would understand the true mystery of the Mass, and would want to stand up for their Faith more.

The Church has been a crucial part of my life since I was a child however during my early adulthood when the time came to make the decision to follow the Church on my own, it was the beauty and reverence shown to the Eucharist that encouraged me to say yes. I feel that God is asking Australia to increase our devotion and understanding of the Eucharist through greater education and doctrine giving in the homilies. The Church needs to ensure that the tabernacle is always in the centre of the Church physically because Christ is the centre and we cannot underestimate the significance of this symbolism. When the tabernacle is on the side, I have noticed people forget he is there, walk past without showing reverence and it has encouraged more chatting inside the Church loudly and disrespecting it as a place of prayer. If the Eucharist is not adored as the centre of the Church, then then it will not survive and will lose its beauty. Protecting and defending priestly celibacy and traditions of the Church such as only male priests is another crucial aspect in protecting the beauty and depth of the Church as established by Christ himself. In my own experience, the witness of priests' sacrifices and devotion to their vocation has helped me to strive to discern my own vocation with the confidence of knowing I will be supported by devoted priests/bishops and I can follow their example especially when the vocation is demanding. I believe that women play a crucial role in the Church and this needs to be promoted and celebrated loudly so that women do not feel like they need to advocate for female priests as they will have confidence and knowledge of the important role that they do play. Overall, there needs to be a greater education about the traditional teachings of the Church so that people can grow in understanding that the Church is more than just the time and season. Do not water down the Church's teachings but present them in a positive light e.g. instead of a set of rules or obligations and bring back the hymns! Reduce the amount of rock n roll and pop sounding music that is played during the liturgy! We can make the Mass beautiful by directing attention to Christ's love and message, not through distracting our attention to the abilities of the band playing. We need more confession times, more promotion and education of the priestly vocation, more Mass times and more architecturally beautiful churches like those in Rome, none of these hall and simple designs. Beautiful churches help direct our gaze to Christ. The Church should feel like a home, promoting after Mass gatherings and community through increased support for youth groups, young adult theology programs and Bible studies all with trained staff and Church leaders. Please do not allow the Church to fall into the lie that allowing gay marriage, woman priests, married priests etc. is the answer. The Church is greater than the changing waves of the culture and our society is thirsting for its beauty.

Response ---- small group -----4. Show more love to those in need. Encourage youth to practice their faith more consistently. Church hierarchy—bishops, Cardinals—to respond to the Royal Commission findings. Many appeared to have no idea of life outside their own world. Maybe the priests and bishops need to be updated. The need for a more humble, more open Church—without the sole governance of the Church coming from Rome. Input from women and men in the leadership. The Church will not be fully functioning and open to the Spirit without the laity, men and women involvement. Lessen the load on priest—more congregational involvement. The need for bishops to have a term working in parishes—not just a visit. They then may have some idea of the people. They are so removed. They might begin to smell like sheep as Pope Francis says. The one bishop who spoke about the needs of his huge Diocese was dismissed. Does the Rome Church have any idea of the huge problems a bishop has to confront? Rome is denying the people the Eucharist by refusing Ordination to only the celibate male. Jesus said preach the gospel to all—without priests the Eucharist and sacraments are denied to many. The bishops showed up very poorly. Bishop [-] is a prophetic source in the Church—Listen to him! Priests from overseas, other countries is not the answer. Ex-priests married to return if so inclined. Specific laity to be considered for liturgical celebration to lessen the load on our priests e.g. funerals. Music must relate to the congregation. Confession—3rd rite to be reinstated. 1st rite to be cancelled. 2nd rite

to remain as is. Perhaps change the format of the Mass to make it more interesting and relatable to youth, e.g. vestments, responses etc. Tolerance is essential. Invitation to all—non-judgemental; Children—to be received into the Church at least 13 years or older when they are more mature. To turn more fully to our faith journey. Women to be allowed any position in Church. Total involvement at all levels—priesthood if necessary, family life, they have idea of managing finances, breakdown in marriage, drug abuse, the elderly etc. My Church community is really important to me, lay people orientated, not religious as Rome etc. Australian Welcoming community essential.

The Church to remain firm in its beliefs no matter what. Remember our God never changes nor do his teachings. Go back and read the messages given by our Blessed Mother at La Salette and Fatima—we have from those messages all the direction we need. Ways to involve all in Church activities. Most important issue is to help Jesus to save souls. Non-practicing Catholics to be welcomed back and not judged—tolerance for all. Ways to help the marginalised. There is a devil in this world—people need to be aware. To live my Catholic faith in the way Jesus showed us in the Beatitudes. Get back to basics. Teach the old green catechism. 10 commandments. Besides loving God, also fear him. To be humble and see Jesus in all around me, and help others in need, spiritually and temporarily. Teach people how much their lives are so important in the grand scheme of God's plans. Teach the children more Catholic religion in schools. Why do they have to have a full term on Muslims? Calling the baptised Catholics/other Christians back to faith and practice in the Church. Teach children of all ages how much they are loved by Jesus. Bring alive the stories of the saints in schools especially recent young people martyrdom. Getting to heaven is a hard road to follow. We have to work at it. Young people and some not so young think you just go there without effort. Reach out to all Catholics including those in irregular marriages and those struggling with sexual identity in a non-judgemental way. How about more missions in the parish? A week of strong sermons did wonders for us 'oldies'. Youth attendance at Mass Music to suit the attendees. The holiness of the Mass and the Eucharist. Pray, Pray, Pray the Rosary unceasingly. The times we are in are foretold and we must stand firm and not swayed by others' influences. Honour God in all things. Liturgy must be seen to be relevant. To establish what are Catholic essentials from the traditions of the Church e.g. sacraments. To ensure that Christ is the centre of all devotions. How the Church is going to deal with the wayward priest? Worrying trend of changing laws of the land will have on the Church e.g. gay marriage, euthanasia, gay teachers. To take care of the earth by doing the utmost in keeping the environment clean and do my bit in recycling materials.

To do the right thing and to love and respect each other.

I believe that as a Church we are being called to contemplative spirituality, I am part of the Australian Christian Meditation Community, together with another woman, I co-ordinate a Christian Meditation Group at [-] Catholic Church at [-]. I believe it would greatly benefit the children in all the Catholic Primary and High Schools if Meditation for Children was introduced over all our schools. There are some schools in which Christian Meditation has been introduced in Catholic Schools and the benefits for the teachers and children are wonderful. I would encourage the Plenary Council to give it some real consideration.

I think the Spirit wants us to sit at the feet of Jesus and adore Him, and let Him love us. It would be fruitful to begin with Eucharistic Adoration, and the starting of exposition of the Blessed sacrament in Perpetual Adoration Chapels. The Holy Spirit is also leading us to embrace the sacraments more—particularly the sacrament of Reconciliation. Now is the time for mercy. Church teachings on marriage, same-sex attractions, chastity, abortion and euthanasia are important and should be discussed ... But I believe the Spirit is calling us to be sensitive and merciful, addressing these issues with great compassion and love.

God wants us to: CHURCH TEACHINGS—go back to the Word of God, the Bible—have less ritual and more emphasis on the presence of God in our lives—become followers of Jesus. GOVERNANCE—demand that our leaders, the priests and bishops, act with transparency, honesty,

consultation, inclusiveness, accountability, social Justice—be available—include women at all levels of the decision making process.
<p>God is asking us to move forward by: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS—engaging youth and young adults—updating the way we worship—being open and accepting of change—providing good example and Christian role models—being very clear about essential Church teachings.</p> <p>INCLUSIVITY—being a strong voice for the marginalised—being tolerant of other religions—being respectful of young and aged—appointing women to senior leadership positions in the Church.</p> <p>CHURCH GOVERNANCE—addressing the sexual abuse cover ups—never letting cover ups happen again—reforming all aspects of Church governance including social justice, clericalism, patriarchy—regaining the trust of the people.</p>
<p>—Us listen to Him.</p> <p>—Us listen to others.</p> <p>—Priests/bishops to listen to God and laity.</p> <p>—Pray more.</p> <p>—Be humble.</p> <p>—Try to regain trust in God and Church.</p> <p>—Protect the environment.</p> <p>—Engage as families and community.</p> <p>—Embrace change.</p> <p>—Renew/reform practices including governance, priest celibacy, inclusion of women.</p>
<p>It has been many decades since Vatican II. It can be conclusively said that Vatican II was an utter failure. Looking at where our Church is now (the Church as an organisation only), it seems to me that God has withdrawn His Grace. More than ever, we need to bring back traditional Church teachings and prayers. For example, we need to bring back prayer to St Michael the Archangel during Mass. We are at war with forces of evil as St Paul said. Heed Our Lady's message at Fatima, Akita, Garabandal. Our parish priests should be reminding the flock to pray, fast, and confess. We are the one Roman and Apostolic Church. We should not be spending time in ecumenical efforts. There is no salvation outside of the Roman Catholic Church. Where's the evangelisation? We have our Magisterium. Let the Magisterium speak. Above all, we must all pray for God to grant our Holy Father and the Prelates Grace and for them to do His Will.</p>
<p>I think that God is asking us to be faithful to His teachings that He handed down 2000 years ago. To stay close to the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist. To restore dignity to His altar. To pray the Mass with great love and reverence. To keep sacred music sacred. To let silence in Church so that honour, glory and adoration can be given to Him in Mass. Rock and secular music during Mass is distracting and not worthy of the worship God deserves. The way people dress is offensive. The way people treat the Mass as a casual get together or a social justice meeting and political agenda is offensive. At the holy Sacrifice of the Mass we stand at Calvary and receive the Holy of Holies, Our Lord (that not even the angels get to receive). God is asking us to put Him as the centre of our worship. Seek Ye first the kingdom of God ... He is calling us to return to adoration. We need holy hours in parishes. Priests need to be more available to hear confession. The confession lines are short but communion lines are long. Jesus message is the same today, yesterday, forever, repent!!! And "Be perfect as my father is". All of us—We are all in need of conversion, priest, bishops, laity and even the pope! And formation—I can hardly find a person at Sunday Mass that understands the Church's teachings. I share Sunday Mass with people who are not Catholic who receive communion, people who have deliberately sterilised themselves to avoid having children who go to communion and say that a priest told them this is ok, people remarried outside the Church who go to communion. People who think the Church's laws are man-made and don't know that the Holy spirit guides us. I have a hard time finding people who truly love Our Lord or who even know anything about our faith. This saddens me. There are people who are Eucharistic ministers who do not love the Lord. Lay People making decisions about liturgy and the parish who are not catechised, do not try to live a holy life and who are puffed up with their own</p>

pride. We need holy priests and the only way to have holy priests is for the laity to be genuine, seeking the Lord, loving the Lord and praying for our priests—God is calling us to conversion. We have so much confusion in our Church. We need to return to the basics and start living a holy sacramental life. Not trying to conform the Church teachings to our ways but conforming ourselves to Christ.

My submission to Plenary Council 2020: First point: The Church should be more careful about the publication of “Theological Theories” which have been accepted by the faithful as dogma, such as the theory of unbaptised children going to Limbo instead of heaven. To a theologian the statement may have been accepted as theory, but to past generations this was thought of as truth and caused a great deal of anguish and sadness. The truth is that no man knows what is in God’s mind and a theory should only promoted as a theory as it is in scientific theories. Second point: When I was young, I was taught that when a person died and a priest came after the person had died, then the priest would still give conditional absolution and anoint the body with oil. Fourteen years ago when my wife died, a priest came to the hospital, he said, that he could not do anything because she was already dead. I was astounded because many people have “died” over the years and have been revived after a time without suffering ill effects. So it has been proven that when the person died their soul did not leave the body immediately. Why is the practice of conditional absolution being discarded? Third point: The fifth mystery of the Rosary is the coronation of Mary as Queen of Heaven. This is a title given by man even though the Catechism of the Catholic Church has no mention of the Sovereignty of the Blessed Virgin. Also man has no authority to decree heavenly positions. Christ said that the position of a person in heaven was not His to endorse but was the exclusive gift of Our Father. Thank you.

The picture painted of the Catholic Church by artists over the centuries has always depicted people who are praying or attending a service and they are painted as dour, solemn, performing a duty without enjoyment or love. Today I attended a Mass for the teachers in the area schools. Most staff were early and both inside and outside the Church were talking enthusiastically and volubly. My first reaction was that they were disrespectful, but then I realized that they were showing love and respect to each other and to Jesus in the Eucharist. Enjoying attending a service to start the New Year and enjoying the experience, instead of dour service. Spontaneity is on the rise in the Church, it is what is driving the Gospel churches to attract large congregations. Enthusiastic participation in all services is to be encouraged in the Catholic Services enjoying the meeting with Christ in the Eucharist. Participating in various volunteer positions has shown me that the people who serve are the happiest and most outgoing people in the Church.

To keep the faith at all costs, to believe in the compassion of God and the forgiveness of a loving God. To do this despite the terrible revelations from the Royal Commission and the actions of those within the Catholic Church who were meant to protect our children. To do this despite the abuse of our Church, and by extension all Catholics, from the official media and numerous anonymous individuals and groups using social media.

Forming Eucharistic centred families, neighbourhood and parishes.

- Many do not know the healing power in the sacraments.
- How to pray in the presence of the Eucharist.
- The essence of the Holy Mass.
- Taking too lightly the sacrament of Reconciliation.

How to form such groups.

- Possible parish retreats emphasising on Word of God.
- Increase Eucharistic Adorations in parishes.
- Reinstate Catechisms in parishes not only to children but as a family with parents.
- Provide programs where people can attend sessions at low cost. Most of the programs /conferences run by diocese (Proclaim) come with high cost.

—Church need to focus from corporate structure to faith based structure by empowering clergy to take faith based initiatives.

—Increasing Marian devotions among the faithful.

Dismantling of the clerical culture and male power structure; involvement of the laity in major Church issues; overhaul of seminaries to better prepare priests for life in the real world; optional celibacy; decision-making roles for women; diaconate for women; greater transparency and accountability on the part of bishops; more emphasis on the contemplative aspect of Catholic spirituality; humble apologies from the hierarchy for clerical child abuse and effective help for victims; willingness to learn from the Anglican experience of a married priesthood.

I am a convert, my wife from a traditional Catholic family, we are Secular Franciscans. Our kids are 23 and 19 and stopped going to Church. They saw it too irrelevant, outdated, not conducive to love, closed minded, manipulative. We are not alone, this exodus happens everywhere. Many people suffer from anxiety caused by unnecessary Church teachings and practices. Through this experience, I opened to other interpretations and I still think that what we have, although it is not perfect, might be one of the best things available to the mankind. However, if we have an opportunity to make it better at last, I think this is what God would want: Modernise. Become Catholic = all-encompassing, oriented on the good. Update the language in the teaching and in the liturgy. Hone the liturgy to focus on the good, on oneness with all and everything. According to Jesus' words and example, we are God (1Jn 3,2), we have/ARE but one consciousness and we should express this in the liturgy and act accordingly. Remove from the teaching, liturgy and daily life outdated and geographically and culturally irrelevant references and practices. Cross—it is an offensive and abusive sign of violence, cruelty, not relevant any more. A shining star or circle would be much better. Sign of the cross—why crucify ourselves? Jesus did not cling to death. Why do we? Kneeling—outdated, humiliating. God does not treat us like camels and no one kneels in front of rulers or politicians any more. Stop lying to ourselves "Lord, I am not worthy..." it is offensive and self-undermining. Speaking in the old Jewish language, if God came to us, he surely considered us worthy of his coming. We should stop the practice of begging for pardon and mercy all the time. It is ourselves who need to deal with faults and mistakes, not some remote "forgiving God". Do not constantly revive the violence, as the main (emotional) reason or motive for salvation and stimulus for our devotion, as if we were people in a Middle East desert thousands of years ago. Do not perpetuate the cruel stories from the Old testament—it is off-putting. We should read positive stories, even from other "old testaments", other religious/cosmological thoughts. God spoke through them and often they are already used in homilies anyway. We should expand our understanding and admire God and ourselves in everything that exists and what we do. Have more forms of liturgy that are equally valid, e.g. common meditation, sport/exercise, dance, meals, discussions, classes to explore/practice our mental faculties. The liturgy should not be a show with one celebrant on stage to be watched in one direction by many separated individuals. Liturgy should unite us and facilitate an experience "among us" not an experience of something/someone "out there". The notion of sacrifice as the main focus of the Mass should also be revisited. Today, people do not think of God as someone needing sacrifices or blood. Even thousands years ... cont. below

I can remember many years ago when my hearing impaired son was attending special classes at a State school. On a Sunday he would attend Mass with the family but there was no meaningful connection with parish community. But perhaps two or three times a year a Mass for the hearing impaired was celebrated in the parish. It was a wonderful joyous celebration with hearing-impaired children and their families and friends. I remember especially at a Christmas Mass for the hearing-impaired children there was a person standing on the altar communicating in sign language to assist some children and adults to follow the Mass. There was a real "connection" between the hearing congregation and the hearing impaired. It was not a "silent" celebration, the singing was a bit "off key" but loud and enthusiastic, and everyone joined in—drawn together in God's love. God is telling me that we need to GIVE IT A GO! At the beginning of

<p>Mass on some Sunday mornings Father invites the young children to come forward to the altar where he blesses them before they go off to their activities relating to Bible stories. How inspirational and welcoming it would be to see one or two children with a disability being encouraged and assisted to join the group. Perhaps a child in the congregation reaching out and inviting a disabled child to come to the altar. What does it matter if they are unpredictable or loud, they are probably expressing their happiness? Also the youth groups have opportunities to invite a teenager with a disability to join in with them in their activities. It would make a world of difference to both the youth and the disabled teenager to "connect" and look beyond and see that they are all just teenagers. I remember when Antioch was a great coming together spiritually and socially for the young people in the parish. My hearing-impaired son was invited to a meeting and it was wonderful to see how he was treated no differently to any other member. In Antioch he found a spiritual and social connection that showed him he was not "different". We've come a long way and we need to continue to find ways to make everyone inclusive. God does not distinguish between the abled and the disabled. He only sees his children.</p>
<p>God is asking Australians to do what God has always asked God's people to do: fulfil your responsibilities.</p>
<p>To be more tolerant towards all people; to be willing to act justly, to be truthful, to name issues as they really are; to reach out to those who are marginalised; to welcome asylum seekers into our society and to show respect and learn from the wisdom of our ATSI sisters and brothers.</p>
<p>To deepen the prayer and spiritual life of individuals. To respect each other, beginning in the family, and in that way to love God. We need to love each other. We need to evangelize and share our faith. We need to be more welcoming and inclusive.</p>
<p>What he has always asked: that we be saints, i.e. that we be ever more like the true Son of God, who is the model for an adoptive son of God.</p>
<p>I believe God is asking us to live by His Son's example. The Catholic Church, not only in Australia, is first and foremost a bureaucracy. Many of my Catholic Church experiences are examples of processes, rules, regulations and not examples of growing my faith. My relationship with God has been nurtured and grown through personal Retreats and my search often with the help of Prayer Companions because I did not find this available in Church. I believe God is asking us to simplify our ways by getting rid of all the red tape at the parish level as well as all the way up the food chain to the Pope. Suggest we do not need volumes of canon law when our Lord gave us His very simple way to live.</p>
<p>Individuals of the Church have more honest approach to problems. A realisation that we are the Church. Encourage more prayer by the congregation. Encourage more prayer into rite of Reconciliation. Priests require clear communication to the flock. Then laity may have more trust in our priest—who shepherd our flock. Priests need to undergo strict test prior to Ordination. To me God is saying our children—our youth need to feel welcome and participate in the Church. First they must understand what they are doing (e.g. Participating in Worship) where they are going (Eternal Life etc.). If we only tell them God exists, go to Mass, receive the sacraments is just things to do. Explaining Scripture is important. Letting them ask questions, the earlier the more they understand. Marriage United approach—Pope <>bishop<>priests<>Us Bible the core—Canon Law that comes about is it Bible teaching? What has been added but is it relevant? Beating the anti-church from media and education institutions. Pressure groups—How do we achieve the appropriate answer. Why something—if we want to change—consequences direct / indirect. I believe we should emphasise spirituality more—and even though I love it, ritual less. As Pope Francis said I believe the "Church" needs to get out and get dirty. We need to make more use of new technology—"Social Media". We should not be frightened of change—whether it be married clergy, women priests, new views on divorce and gay people. How to involve young families in our parish life for future longevity? To pray for and where possible encourage more people to join Religious Life. To allow those who have left Religious Life to participate and lead congregations in our parish life. To support each other in our faith Journey and not be decisive.</p>

Not allow the confessional to shield criminal activity or actions. To welcome those who have had to flee their homelands. To see everyone as equally made in God's image. Go back to the essence of Jesus' message. To re-ignite spirituality in a world that seems devoid of it. Set an example as a nation for the rest of the world. Overhaul of liturgy. To have complete transparency and honesty from all levels of Church hierarchy. To look after our earth—the environment, climate change etc. To know the place of truth in what is being given us by clerics and by laity in the modern Catholic Church. To find and nurture the "Lost Sheep" of today's world and to find the reasons for this situation. True message on honesty in Christian life as lived in Australia today. Generosity in Thought, Deed and Action in living the Life of a Christian today. To listen to the victims of abuse and give them closure by addressing their needs. By showing we care by paying them what they need for counselling and restructure of their lives. Paying their compensation whilst they are alive so they do not die feeling neglected. Include more women as acolytes and decision makers. People often confide in women as they feel they are more compassionate so if there is a more visible presence this will help. Allow priests to marry as this would help them to understand family life more. To wake up to reality—1) The world/Earth is facing extinction. 2) The human race is in danger of extinction if things don't change (David Attenborough). 3) This life is finite—what then is our future? To speak our beliefs—1) I am a follower of Jesus. 2) I am concerned for the future of the human race. 3) Bullying, ignorance has become a way of some overriding factual evidence. To learn in depth the reasons for Child Abuse—the one of the greater reasons for loss of people to the Church—1) Priests not marrying (one possible reason). 2) Psychological problems already in that person. 3) Elevation of priests to sainthood above laity. 4) Others—to be able to discuss with others. To talk about the changes we have seen in Society in our time.—1) Blind obedience. 2) The power of fear vs the power of love. 3) Acceptance of parental/ societal control vs the independent of "the one too" society. 4) The change in sexual freedom with advent of the Pill. For Church Leaders to be true disciples of God and to not allow those within their care to suffer i.e. paedophiles etc. not be allowed to be part of the Church Leaders and to obey God's laws. Use our technological advances to help those in need. Support each other especially in areas of mental health. Be a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves. Share our wealth with others less fortunate both in Australia and overseas. Support our youth even though we may feel we don't understand them/ they don't understand us. Be strong leaders by supporting them rather than lecturing/ telling them "This is the way". Be accepting more of young ideas/dreams.

Be accepting of migrants/ Refugees and those who may be part of the LGBTIQ minority groups that is respect all people for their beliefs as we are all part of one community. Look after our precious environment.

God is asking us to be accepting and inclusive of all God is asking us to reach out to youth and families. God is asking us to modernise—the needs of HIS people have changed therefore the Church must change. God is asking us to rethink the role of priests—married priests who understand their community. Why must they be single males who are out of touch with the realities of modern life, relationships, parenting, financial hardship etc.? God wants us to continue to move towards reconciliation and to ensure the horrors of the past never happen again. God wants us to spread care and love to the marginalised in society. God wants us to realise that "if you always do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got". God wants us to bravely and boldly move towards the future—Just like Jesus did! God wants us to care for the environment—we as a Church are not doing enough. God wants us to redefine what it means to be Catholic in a modern world.



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 and when will the bishops address the lack of faith in our schools?
2. What support structure will be put in place for supporting our Catholic students and teachers?
3. Do you think the Church in Australia can survive without adapting to the present day culture?
4. What is the Church doing to prevent sexual abuse?
5. Do you think the Church should be involved in animal welfare and other environmental issues?
6. How do you intend encouraging the youth of today and their parents to return to the Catholic faith?
7. Is the Church organisation willing for priests to make the beatitudes an explicit component of every Mass?
8. How can the Church demonstrate acceptance of all in the community?
9. How can the Church in Australia most effectively advocate for voluntary celibacy?
10. When and how will the Church show its support for women in ordained roles?
11. How soon will the Church accept its responsibility for the injury to children, including those who are now adults, caused by Catholic clergy?
12. In what ways will the bishops make their actions and ideologies more transparent to us who are in their care?
13. How can we make the liturgy more inclusive of those with different needs, from different cultures, different language groups, and different levels of understanding?
14. How is the Catholic Church going to make sure there are no more priests abusing children taking advantage of their position, protecting the Church rather than the victims? Is confession going to be a tool of protection for the offender?
15. What can we do to promote the Eucharist as the source and summit of our life?
16. How do we formally apologise for past wrongdoings?
17. Is there a place for lay leadership in the Church?
18. Is there room for flexibility of liturgy/Church so all can be involved and catered for?
19. How do you think the Church will continue without addressing Social Justice issues of inclusivity?
20. What is the Church going to do about Clericalism?
21. How do we ensure the past atrocities of abuse never occur again?
22. How will we measure the success of this Plenary?
23. What changes can actually be put into place through this Plenary Council?

24. Why has the Church let the clergies stop practicing traditions?
25. Will our Catholic Church be relevant if there is no, or limited, change?
26. Why has the response to child abuse been so slow and vague, and what impact is this having?
27. Have homosexual individuals been accepted into the Catholic Church?
28. Have women been given leadership roles within the Catholic Church?
29. Is there a possibility for priests to be able to marry?
30. Can parents have their children baptised without being married?
31. Can people of all faiths receive communion if they choose?
32. How can we make the Church more inviting to future generations?
33. How can we make the Church more inclusive of all people, from all backgrounds, working together with all faiths?
34. Could we have more celebrations for our Indigenous culture in Australia?
35. Can the Church be more welcoming to other cultures such as Muslims?
36. Can the Church involve children more?
37. Could more everyday people be involved in the Church?
38. Could the Church have more to do with our local environment?
39. Why is this the first time in such a long time that a Plenary Council has been called?
40. How can we ensure that we will be free to practice our faith in Australia and in particular, that priests will be free to keep the seal of confession?
41. How can we spread God's word to non-believers?
42. How do we make the Church "relevant" to people now?
43. How do we improve leadership at a parish level, but also within the hierarchy of the Church?
44. How do we support and train our priests to be spiritual leaders, to be relatable and to connect to their flock (and free them up from their administration roles)?
45. How do we draw on the excellent resources within our laity?
46. Will the Church really listen to any ideas and if so how?
47. The Church needs to [be] counter cultural and reflect the 'original' Church, rather than the views of old institutionalized men who hold onto their positions... is the Church strong enough to do this?
48. How are we changing to adapt to the needs of others in a way that reflects the actions and teachings of Jesus?
49. Are we respectful, compassionate and merciful of others?
50. Are we accepting of everyone in the same way Jesus was?
51. Are we putting in place strategies that will keep the Church and its people alive and engaged in the present and future?
52. Will Gay Marriage be allowed?
53. Will IVF be shown to not be a sin and be supported by the Church?
54. Will female pastors be allowed?
55. Will church music become more "modern"? (e.g. like the soul Masses with upbeat church music)
56. Will the Church accept LGBT?
57. Will there be a real place for women?
58. What intention does Australia have for the Catholic Church?
59. How can we help to increase the number of vocations?

60. I would like the Plenary Council to consider what are appropriate structures within the Church at parish, diocesan and national levels to facilitate coordinated responses to the social and environmental issues?
61. How can we foster a love for the sacrament of reconciliation?
62. How can we increase our Eucharistic devotion both within and outside the Mass?
63. How can we provide better resources for transmitting the truth and beauty of the faith in schools?
64. How can we help more families to see the need to go to Mass on Sundays?
65. How can we look after the liturgy better?
66. Will you please consider the issues that are facing ordinary Catholics and that are making it hard for us to maintain the faith?
67. Why are the Australian Catholic bishops afraid of the Vatican?
68. The Church and laity should work together to increase practicing Catholics, what and how is the Church doing this?
69. Are the seminaries being overhauled so they can produce holy and selfless priests who will be dynamic in propagating Christ's teachings?
70. What will become of the Church if vocations continue to decline?
71. What is the Church's position on Catholic education in Australia should further funding restrictions/the removal of funding occur?
72. How can we as a whole Church support youth and music ministries which are often under resourced?
73. Are you willing to acknowledge that there has been a "dumbing down" of religious education at primary, secondary and tertiary levels?
74. Are you willing to consider a return to a full understanding of the Deposit of Faith as interpreted through Tradition by the Magisterium?
75. How do we make Mass a joyful experience that feels alive; how can we be left at the end of Mass filled with love, uplifted by love; Is being a priest a loving experience?
76. Why are bishops required to dress the way they do?
77. How can we (Australian Catholic Church) be more accepting of others?
78. How can we provide safe, supportive places for isolated people to find connection and community?
79. How can we better integrate our many foreign born priests into the Australian Church?
80. How can we provide high quality faith formation in parishes?
81. Why is the public relations between the Church and the media so poor in this country?
82. Why do my friends who have come from Catholic schools have so little understanding or knowledge about their own faith?



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 40 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.

Becoming a Christian meditator through my learning about Fr John Main and Fr Laurence Freeman's (OSB) way of listening / praying has changed me, along with my 12-step program through Gamblers Anonymous.

I am a revert to the faith. I became Catholic because of the inspiration I received from an authentically Catholic teacher who became a role model of sorts. Unfortunately, she was the only one out of all the staff, who were mostly atheists. As an adult now (19), I've had the blessing of getting to know others who are currently teachers or are studying to be teachers. They are doing everything they can to commit to God, despite the hardship of the call, and place their vocation of teaching into His hands. But they need desperate support from the Church. I truly believe in schools as having the power to renew the Church and restore the faith in my generation, but they have to be authentically Catholic.

My 1940s/50s parents' commitment to the faith, a succession of committed parish priests, good nuns, priests and brothers in different Catholic schools who educated me have under God shaped my own faith. Sadly, none of my three adult children all educated in Catholic schools attend Church, although one of them has at least had her children baptised ... all good living young men and women but with no commitment to Church.

My first encounter with Christianity was when I was six. My piano teacher bought me a children's version of the Bible. I really enjoyed the Old Testament, which seemed very exciting. But I grew bored of the New Testament and never read it. My parents are Chinese, so I wasn't raised religiously. In my years at high school, I became an ardent atheist and would scorn my Christian friends with my scepticism. During University, I attended a college for a year and sang in their chapel choir. This was the experience that opened my mind. I attended an exhibition of Vincent van Gogh's artwork in Melbourne and learnt about his deeply spiritual connection with the Christian message—despite not explicitly practising the faith. He had indeed trained to be a minister earlier in his life, and his father was one (albeit Protestant). Reading two books by an author called Christopher Lasch, the first called */The Culture of Narcissism/* published in 1979 as a commentary of the 1970s and the dysfunctional and maleficent nature of American society; the second called */Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy/*, which criticised the professional class in America for betraying the working class, the cause of progress and democracy—instead opting to concern themselves only with issues that affected themselves. He concludes that perhaps that this disunity in society has its origins in religion—and perhaps that religion is its solution. I strived to learn more about Christianity. I read a book by a professor in the philosophy of religion called */How to Believe/* by John Cottingham. I also watched a documentary series by Cambridge professor, Don Cuppitt called */Sea of Faith/*. In the documentary, he expounds on numerous theologians. Two come to mind. Kierkegaard was vehemently critical of the Danish Protestant Church. He saw his task to 'shake off a Mass of nominal Christians'. Danish society in his time was going through major upheaval via

<p>industrialisation. The Church welcomed it, thinking that other means of being Christian would arise in the new secular society. Kierkegaard said no. By accepting that, you will lose sight of your gospel and lose your flock. It is not merely enough to attend Church. One must act as a Christian: live a life of virtue. The second is Liechtenstein, who denounced the metaphysics of God. 'Does God exist?' is a useless question. We can only understand God via language, therefore metaphysics is irrelevant. He famously derided University, telling his students to go out and get jobs in local book stores and engage with the community instead of studying philosophy. His first treatise was written in the trenches of WWII (for which he was awarded his PhD), and he only returned to Cambridge after living for many decades in the countryside as a teacher. Now, I volunteer for GetUp! and sing for my local Catholic Church twice per week and I even accept Communion. I am glad to do so.</p>
<p>I had been away from the Church for an awful long time and then I met two strangers at an airport—after a long conversation—told me to unlock (<i>sic</i>). I now have a personal relationship with Jesus regardless of the wrongdoings of the Church. God will be the judge, not me.</p>
<p>-I have admired the total, open and altruistic dedication of some members of St Vincent de Paul Society giving their free time to help the poor and selfless. -I thank God that I have met here in Australia many holy priests. -I consider also a truly Christian message that given by St Mary of the Cross MacKillop in regard to foreigners.</p>
<p>I was a Presbyterian and became a Catholic just before I had my first baby, I did not really understand Mary, our Mother as Catholics do. My darling mother-in-law explained it so simply to me as we were washing up—she said "if you were in trouble, sad, worried, needed someone to talk to and love you, who would you turn to?" "My Mother of course" I said. I have never ever forgot that wonderful conversation.</p>
<p>My upbringing with Catholic parents who always attended Mass and thereby set the example which still remains today. I was lucky enough to have 2 lovely Aunties and 2 first cousins who were Nuns which reinforced the love of God in me.</p>
<p>I teach catechism and what I find is that youth associate the Church with preaching rules based in tradition. They resist this as they do not see at Mass the preaching of Jesus' teachings like the Beatitudes—beyond the dry reading of the Gospel. Youth—and others not attending Church—want values and not rules/tradition taught to them.</p>
<p>I'm a Syrian Catholic. I prefer to be called a Christian. I'm not at all shaped by the Catholic Church in Australia. My faith comes from the Bible. I study the Bible every day.</p>
<p>I'm a cradle Catholic from the Philippines and attended weekday Masses when able and still do now that I am retired. My education from kindergarten through to university was in Catholic institutions. But it is only after spending the last 5 years or so attending a Bible Study Fellowship with an interdenominational flavour that I really learned to appreciate the richness of the Bible. I suggest that those that be looked into the format of BSF. They must be doing something right as some young mothers resume weekly attendance as soon as their babies are 6 weeks. And many working women arrange their schedule so that they are free on Tuesday mornings to attend BSF at the St James Anglican Church in Turrumurra, NSW. BSF is in many countries. In Sydney, there are several venues. The men usually meet in the evenings. I've attended Bible Conferences organised by the Broken Bay Diocese in Sydney and they are really great and I would say, superior in content that what we get at BSF. But because we don't really need to make a personal response, it does not take long for me to forget what I have heard. It's the regularity of weekly BSF meetings where within a group of about 15 we share our answers to questions raised about the verses that we are pondering on, their meaning and significance and how these impact us that really makes it sink it and facilitates a change in our life. Our unguided study and sharing, is then reinforced and clarified by a 30 minute lecture. On our way out, we collect an 8-page study notes. The first 6 pages relating to the verses we had studied and the last 2 a set of questions to answer for the following week. But it is the sharing of ideas and personal stories that really bind the group together and make us feel that we are co-travellers on the path of salvation.</p>

<p>I have been very fortunate to have come from a family where the gift of faith and its celebration and participation in parish life was a priority and a positive choice. I have had both the opportunity to and also made the choice to study theology and spirituality and I can say that I have learned so much about myself and my relationship with my God because of those experiences. I now find that although I choose to continue to celebrate weekly, in a parish, that I am feeling more inclined to remove myself from community celebration of liturgies and focus on my personal relationship with God. This saddens me, because in the past, I felt that I gained something challenging and positive from the Church celebrations but now I don't always feel that each week when I celebrate at Mass. I drive by other Christian churches and read quotes both spiritual and reflective and I find that I come home to discuss that with my husband and how and what that quote means for us and the way we can live our commitment to our Christian/Catholic lives. I wonder what this says. How can the Church be more real and relevant to both me and others. By the way, I choose to be part of my faith community because I want my faith to be an integral part of my life—not because it may enhance my employment prospects.</p>
<p>I grew up going to Church each week, I work at a Catholic school as a teacher and parent three children who we send to Catholic schools. Most peers never attend Mass. I am attending and bring my children but see the extremely flawed view of the Church and disengagement of many parishioners. Faith is there, parents want to educate their children in Catholic schools but never attend Mass???? There is something very wrong with this. How can one institution repel so many people who still want to have faith but are opposed to so many aspects of how that faith is practised? It has shaped me but making me think, question and review my values within the Church and its community.</p>
<p>Not a story as such but I think a lot of older Catholics grew up with a strong sense of guilt and I think that has shaped the way the Church is today. Jesus showed us that God is forgiving, we as a Church need to be so also.</p>
<p>Practicing Catholic Parents; Primary school: St Joseph Nuns; Secondary school: Christian Brothers and Franciscans</p>
<p>I was baptised when I was ten days old, my children were baptised as babies and my husband and I continue to be active in the Church. I am concerned that people from my generation who were extremely active in ministry, whose children attended Catholic schools, who ran baptismal programs and led RCIA groups and attended prayer groups and took part in discussion groups are no longer coming to Church—no longer active in any ministries or communicating with the Church. Who will be the senior members of the Church community? Who will be the constant prayer-keepers, the ones who say the Rosary for the whole parish, the quiet, solid base against which the community leans for support? Our parish school resists any kind of relationship with our Church community, and sees its business as education not as building the parish community and the wider Church. When the current senior generation dies, who will be the Church? What will they understand by 'Catholic', and with so little experience of the liturgy or the Eucharistic community, what will their understanding of Eucharist be?</p>
<p>I grew up in Melbourne in the parish of [-] [-]. We were blessed to have forward thinking and intellectual priests who could communicate well and had a genuine love for their community. I don't know where all these priests have gone. The good priests who are left rightly are promoted, and we are now left with priests who simply miss the mark. Please know your people, we would love to know you again.</p>
<p>I have always practiced my Catholic faith; I went to a Catholic school all of my school-life and have always been a regular Mass goer. Over the years I have learnt a lot about the Catholic faith. Over the last 6-7 years I have worked with the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, working with children between the ages of 3-9 years. This work has made me more aware of what is happening in the Mass, and also knowing more about the Bible. Working with these children has taught me that I need to keep learning about my faith, in order to pass it onto them as best I can.</p>

<p>My situation is I am under the Spiritual guidance of [-] group. The mystery of God is to be sought, but first we must be made aware of the Holy Spirit.</p>
<p>What have helped me to persevere in my faith are baptism and the grace of God that comes from the sacraments particularly in the Eucharist and Confession. I was also very fortunate to be married to a good Catholic wife who has influenced me to keep going. In a marriage when one is weak, the other one strengthens and vice versa. I have also been blessed with a vocation of one of my children to apostolic celibacy. This confirmed that the grace of God was acting in my family. Christian acts of piety such as daily family Rosary and devotion to our Lady have no doubt contributed to this. We are very grateful for this blessing from God.</p>
<p>My own Christian upbringing and example of my parents had a strong influence. As well as the support of my husband, family and friends that I can share my faith with. Doing daily prayer and rosary. God has blessed my family with a number of vocations namely my sister who is a nun and gives constant spiritual help and support. God has also granted that my daughter has a celibate vocation to Opus Dei. Those of us that have the vocation to marriage, help each other in the good and bad times to remain faithful. This journeying together and striving towards fidelity in our own spiritual paths strengthens us to persevere.</p>
<p>I drifted away from the Church in my late teens and eventually became an atheist. In my thirties, through the example and prayers of my parents who were praying the rosary (all 3 mysteries at the time) every day because Our Lady had asked for it at Medjugorje, I received an extraordinary grace from God while sitting on the beach one day. The question came into my mind, "You can believe in so many things (i.e. New Age) why can't you believe that Mary is appearing in Medjugorje?" So I decided to say 3 Hail Mary's to see what would happen. My soul was flooded with love and the certainty that it was all true. The Holy Trinity, The Blessed Virgin Mary, the Angels and the communion of Saints all existed and loved me. I went straight to confession and had an incredible experience of forgiveness and the love and mercy of God through a beautiful priest. I have attended daily Mass since that day 30 years ago—at first to make up for lost time and all the graces I had wasted in my years away from the Church. I have had so much help over those years from priests and fellow Catholics; from the Scriptures, from Bible Study groups, from Christian books, from the internet, phone apps, EWTN, YouTube. Every moment I learn something more about the love of God and am brought closer to Him. We are living in such a great time to be a Catholic. There are endless resources available and so much to support us in our faith. I am so grateful to have been given the grace to turn back and come home to the Church.</p>
<p>My faith journey has passed through a number of Christian denominations and been greatly enriched by exposure to many non-Christian religions. The greatest experiences to date for myself have arisen from inclusive loving interactions with people of faith. Alternatively, negative experiences have almost always arisen from dogmatic adherence that lack Jesus' compassion. (e.g. a divorcee being referred to complex Catholic procedures/doctrine when they simply want to practice their faith ... Wonderful Christians in tears as they recall the Catholic response to a much loved child born out of rape or a so called "Christian" school's response to their child's questioning their sexuality ... An "Christian educator's retort that I "think too much" when I question their school's banning books by Dr Seuss (because he was divorced) or that they might benefit students to understand that there are different ways to view origins of the world. The basing of faith on Inclusion calls on us to be challenged through openness to alternative views, cultures that can greatly enrich our Church's, our own and our society's faith journey.</p>
<p>The change after Vatican II and the hopes that emanated from same that never came to fruition.</p>
<p>Whenever we have moved in Australia, it has been the Church family that has welcomed us and enabled us to become involved in community and activities as well as supported us in our new home. We have not needed to wait for others to invite us to join but have been welcomed into all Church activities.</p>
<p>My primary school was with a religion, which was of fear to a punishing GOD, everything was a sin, Catholics were like, in a special club. Secondary school was Protestant but freedom of religion,</p>

there were Jews, and others, we had a Catholic priest from North America with more worldwide vision. Discovered a God of LOVE. In Australia, the Passionate priests establish family groups within our parish, I joined one in 1982. Until today they are still my friends. As a newcomer I was very grateful. Friendship develops in this mundane world full of problems, not necessarily inside Church.

I have a mental illness and have been living with it since I was diagnosed in 1998. I found myself unable to understand reality and difficulties in maintaining relationships. I started volunteering for a local Perpetual Adoration in Lidcombe around 2016, and went to WYD 2016 to Poland. I also prayed constantly for Our Lady's intentions. I became enrolled in the Brown Scapular, and prayed the rosary daily. I started taking injections and took my medication regularly and started to gain control of my mental health. I now can perceive reality and differentiate between my hallucinations and real life events. Though relationships are still a struggle for me, I am starting to gain what I think are lifelong friends from Church. I strongly suggest those who suffer from a mental illness to do something similar especially if they have difficulty taking their prescribed medication regularly due to negative side effects or other reasons to do the following: a) Pray the rosary daily, b) pray for Our Lady's intentions, c) consider weekly/regular adoration, d) make a pilgrimage if possible with the aim of offering it up for Our Lady's intentions, e) wear the Miraculous Medal and pray for healing, f) pray for obedience and take the medication as prescribed. I hope this helps. God bless.

Our story is so common amongst our friends who go to Mass, We have 2 sons who are married with 2 and 3 children respectively. Both went to Catholic schools. One is married to a Baptist and he goes to her Church with the children and is heavily involved in all sorts of Church activities. The other is married to a non-Catholic. One child goes to a Catholic school for children with special needs. He does not go to Mass except maybe at Easter and Christmas. His daughter goes to a non-denominational Grammar school. We do our best to speak about God to our grandchildren and will say prayers at night when babysitting. Both are not impressed by the Catholic Church as revealed by the Royal Commission but do understand that all Catholics are not like this and that the Church does many good works through such activities a St Vinnies and schools for children with special needs. We hope and pray that at least 2 of our grandchildren will receive the sacraments.

People spoke of feeling hurt and losing trust in the Church and in priests due to the Church not being transparent in dealing with wrongdoings. The discussion was also about the need for the Church to be more flexible and reflect the mission of Jesus. Discussed the lack relevance of the Church today for our current generation. There was a feeling that the work the Catholic Schools do in "Churching" young people could provide a model for the parish.

I turned away from the Church as a teenager. I had a lot of philosophical doubts about Christianity and became an atheist. I didn't feel comfortable raising those doubts with priests etc. As I got older, I actually rejected atheism and turned back towards Christianity, but that was primarily due to my own reflections and reading works by non-Catholic thinkers (especially Protestants.) Eventually I came back towards the Catholic Church because I find a lot of the fundamental assumptions of Protestantism to be intellectually untenable (sola scriptura, etc.), and because Orthodoxy is just too culturally alien to me, and I felt like I needed a spiritual home, a community, instead of just trying to go it alone spiritually. But still I have a lot of doubts about some aspects of Church teaching. And I still don't feel very comfortable talking about them with priests, etc., even though it would probably help. I feel like if priests could reach out and encourage people to express their doubts rather than keep them to themselves it might help me.

Story 1: I have converted to a Catholic. I felt I was welcomed into the Church by a young active parishioner.

Story 2: I was involved in World Youth Day. The experience allowed me to be welcomed into the Catholic community and tradition through non-threatening celebrations and song.

Story 3: Involvement with Antioch was a great way to promote a positive way to practice being a Catholic.

Story 4: Making confession with the priest in the past and present is confronting for both children and adults.

I was born into the Catholic faith and my schooling was with the Ursulines. My faith was a large part of me: I prayed and obeyed. In my mid-teens, Vatican II took place. I was pleased with the changes but didn't look too deeply into them. When I married I attended Mass with my husband and brought our sons up in the faith. I was only slightly involved in parish life. Life continued and priests good and bad ministered to the parish. However, it wasn't until my eldest son had mental health issues that I approached our new, youngish pastor. He was so caring and understanding that I realised he was the new breed from Vatican II. When he left, another pastor of a similar ilk ministered successfully to the parish for 16 years. He recognised the skills and talents of the parish and chose a pastoral council model that enabled parishioners to feel that they were valued and part of the community. Then all that changed with a succession of pastors with dictatorial ideas. We ended up with a traditionalist pre-Vatican overseas pastor whose culture was the farthest away from Australia's. It was then I started looking into the actual running of the parish and found it lacking. I realised that the Church was actually light years away from the one Jesus founded. I approached the pastor in vain then had to take my concerns now accompanied by others to the bishop. Although he shared our concerns he seemed powerless to bring about the necessary reforms. We were met with clericalism at every turn. Although I was a member of the parish for 47 years I could no longer attend. I now attend, with my husband, a neighbouring parish where a post Vatican II pastor has been appointed. His ministry has enabled me to grow spiritually but I no longer view myself as Catholic. I am a follower of Jesus Christ and try and use the gospels as my moral compass. Of my three sons, my eldest committed suicide, his two sons don't attend Church. My second son's two sons attend a Catholic school but are not religious. Whilst my youngest son's children attend a State school because of the clergy sexual abuse and the clericalism culture that enabled it.

I have lived my life in the service and protection of those who need assistance. I am disillusioned by a Church who contributes to the downfall of humanity. I have lived a blessed life. I have no need to ask God for anything. It is important to thank God for what I have received through my own hard work. I have accepted my setbacks as Gods will to improve my service to others.

The group all shared stories of feeling disengaged with the Church at times. Our children, particularly teenagers just don't have a connection to their faith or the Church. We worry about the future for our children—the environment and the disconnected society. In a time when we as a society need the connection to faith and our Church the most, we feel the Church is not meeting its people where we are at.

We are not Catholic but our children attend a Catholic school. We have been so happy and impressed with the staff and school system. Our children are benefiting greatly from the experience. Unfortunately, when we approached the school Church to enquire how we as a family could become Catholic we were turned away rudely. My son especially has wanted to experience the journey so many of his friends are and it was really disappointing to be told you can't become Catholic.

We are a group of migrant Catholics. We are fortunate to have our own Chaplaincy and Chaplains to say Mass and guide us using our own mother language. We hope our children and grandchildren can grow in the same Catholic environment with support and clear direction from the Church. We value the sharing our resources with local parish from which our Community was built.

I grew up as a Catholic. I grew up losing faith in the Church until one day, with the grace of God, and rosary prayers from my parents, I came back to Catholic Church. Realising from what I see from the Church now, we have lost so much symbolism that gives us identity from our "new order" Church.

I recently had the chance to have an international musician perform as part of his tour at our local church. The music and style was very much within the Church's message (being spiritual in origin) yet I got rejected outright at the first church hall we have and after spending time with another church in the parish got agreed by a first group, only to have another one of the representative groups decide no. The frustration here was he was performing in other churches around the country as part of the tour, and I had seen him in a church performance the year before. It would have been a perfect opportunity to reach the wider community and gain positive exposure for the Church, but it was blocked based on church factors that other churches obviously don't have.

I like attending Mass on the weekend as it strengthens my faith.

Our daily interactions with children with disabilities, and the struggles they and their families face, highlight all the more the need for increased advocacy and inclusion. Additionally, we are a group of people with a variety of faith backgrounds, yet we work in a Catholic school and embrace each other's differences and faith viewpoints harmoniously and respectfully. Why can't the Church simulate this too? Jesus reached out to the marginalised of his time. We must do the same.

We have people on staff who have personally experienced this misunderstanding and discrimination. One who was in an abusive relationship and fell pregnant as a result of rape chose to abort and divulged this in a confession whereby an unsupportive comment was made by the priest. Another example shared was a marriage breakdown and divorce with 3 children borne from the union. Ten years later, she wished to re-marry in the Church but was refused as there was no annulment. She refused to get an annulment as this would mean saying that the three children created were not born out of love, which they were initially. It is extremely frustrating for women to listen to the teachings and decisions made by the Church on their behalf, yet the decision-makers are all men and unmarried men at that. In a workplace that is predominantly women, the nurturing culture and compassionate heart seems to resonate more emotively. Why can't the Church simulate this?

In a workplace that advocates the rights of children, who screen anyone who enters the workplace and requests WWCC as mandatory practice, who ensures perpetrators face the full consequence of the law, it is extremely upsetting and frustrating that the Church 'workplace' appears to follow a completely different path. This must change.

One staff member expressed that it is of great frustration to those of us who are believers and active followers of the Catholic faith to be presumed any 'less a Catholic' due to limited attendance at Mass. Additionally, if the family is at the core of many Catholic values, why then is the Mass not shaped to appeal accordingly? Another staff member expressed concern that those passing judgments on the way in which the liturgy should be devised, are often the most removed from the actual reality of the community in which they serve. Another staff member knows of wonderful men who are fathers/husbands/grandfathers who have often said they would love to have been a priest but didn't pursue due to the love for a female and a desire to have a family: what a loss that the Church has encountered as a result. Another staff member mentioned that she feels connected to her faith and the teachings of Jesus which she practices regularly in her life, but doesn't feel connected to her 'Church': does this make her any less a believer in the eyes of God? Some staff members commented on the 'elitism' that seems to resonate within those who represent the Church—a kind of aloofness and detachment that doesn't foster any warmth or ability to attract people to the faith. Some staff said that they take offense to judgments made by the Church that one can live in a modern world, engage with modern happenings, but are less holy as a result. They say that this judgement negates the social outreach they are a part of, the administering to those with disabilities they do every day, the loving family they are raising, the acceptance of a gay son they have, etc. It hurts them and frustrates them.

I have found that meditation has made me more spiritually aware. I would like it to be introduced into all Catholic Schools.
<p>Many of those who participated gave thanks for the leadership of our parish priest, Fr [-], and his genuine care and acceptance of the children within our school community. The timetabled Family Masses that are made available, plus the parish HOPE Masses, are two examples of how this can be done elsewhere for the benefit of all! Additionally, they mentioned that the advocacy of Sr [-] OP for children with disabilities has affected much positive change for the children within our community. She assists in the facilitation of the school-based sacramental Program and is a presence within the school always offering support and guidance for families.</p> <p>Some of the parents expressed cynicism that nothing will be done with this information, yet they hope it will affect change. Society can indeed be a horrible place to expose their children to—constant judgments, lack of compassion, rudeness, discrimination. Why can't the Church do more to advocate on behalf of the marginalised, such as our children with disabilities. One parent said that it's one thing to release a paper, or make a statement, and another to actually 'walk the walk', not just 'talk the talk'. Where are the senior servers who have a disability? Where's the Deacon with a vision impairment? There needs to be more visibility so as to help break down the prejudice.</p> <p>One parent shared the story of her daughter being abused by a ATSP driver. Her daughter is non-verbal and the only way to know this was happening, was a change in behaviour, her clothes often on incorrectly and occasional late arrivals home. How is it that this person suffered the full consequences of the law, yet a priest appears not to? It all becomes hush-hush and a boys' club vibe. No doubt there are many more victims of abuse that may never be known because they are non-verbal or suffer an intellectual disability and that is extremely scary and worrying. It must stop.</p>
I became a Catholic after confirmation at 2010, my young daughter after confirmation at 2014. I have a strong feeling—my vocation and mission to pray for my Christian family member about their faith. Day by day, I beg Our Lord God's mercy on our life journey and pray for the Catholic Church, for the Christians, their faith in God, my relatives, family, our country, our elders, our young people and the whole world. I have joined a group, like *Morning prayer group, Bible study group, Choir, to share our faith and our happy Catholic life journey. I have one 25-year-old daughter [-], and one boy, 24 years old [-] and girl [-]. They are still confused and busy in their learning journey. May God show mercy on my family.
During my youth I enjoyed attending Mass each Sunday and regularly during the week. Church was an important part of my life and it also became a social event after Mass on Sundays. I also attended Catholic Youth Organisation for fun times with my peers (e.g. picnics, concerts, swimming, tennis etc. supervised by the parish priest). In my community, we cared for and supported each other. Catholic School shaped my faith backed up at home.
Being with many like-minded people from all over the world at World Youth Day strengthened my faith but also made me realise that if the Church wants more young people to come to Church, they need to think like the young people; be more accepting and open minded and non-judgmental
I've felt God's presence a number of times first time when I was 9; later in my twenties which led me to Christian meditation twice a day
My faith has been shaped by my dedicated parents and family and by my Catholic school education. Despite the devastating effects of sexual abuse experienced by 2 of my 3 brothers at the hands of Catholic priests and brothers, I still continue to hope and pray that our Church will survive this dreadful, heinous and disgusting history we share and live with.
In emails and parish bulletins/homilies we are told how to vote, what to do, what to think. Some of us have seen people walk out of churches when these things are being said. This turns people

away. People have been excommunicated for marrying people of another faith and this has changed, so we know change is possible.
Faith as part of family culture is vital. As a group people were individually inspired by leaders in the Church. Faith helps with Mental Health and makes us who we are.
God wants us to be good friends and respect others. He wants us to not bully other people so they don't feel sad and lonely. We can be kind to our friends by helping them when they fall over and playing with children who have no friends. We can be kind and help others in our community by buying food for them if they can't afford it. When it is winter time, we donate warm clothes and jackets to help people keep warm. When it is Christmas time, we donate food and drinks to make Christmas hampers. We try to spread kindness so everyone can have a happy Christmas. We think the Church can be kind by welcoming everyone to the Church family and helping anyone in need. We will try to continue to be like Jesus and always remember to be kind and help our friends.
My own children have grown up within a Catholic schooling community and have no interest in the Church because they find going to Church a chore. The reasons being: The music and priests who seem so far out of touch with society. Another reason is that the priests are sometimes so hard to understand due to an accent.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being involved in the Mass is good • Singing is good but songs need to be more current • Praying • It is not good when we don't understand what the priest is talking about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I remember a time that I have seen a group of people being pushed around for being different. This is one of the reasons why I believe God is asking us to share our differences. We should be following the message of Jesus and that is to accept people for who they are. • I think we should share our differences so we all belong I have seen people who don't fit in, and don't have a home. I think we should treat people that don't fit in and don't have homes the same as people that do fit in and do have homes. • Sharing your differences means that it is ok to be different and you don't have to be the same as other people. • This topic means to be yourself and not let other people stop you from being who you are. It doesn't matter where you come from, me and my friends all come from different places and have different backgrounds but we love celebrating that about each other. • Where we live there are not a lot of poor people, but we know in other places there are lots of poor people, in our country and in lots of countries around the world. We think that it is important that we donate money, clothes and food to those people who are poor and that don't have as good a life as we do.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect means to listen to one another and give everybody a chance to be heard, instead of thinking that your opinion is the only one. • I believe we need to respect other people's cultures. God made us all different and I think that God is asking us to set aside differences and be respectful of different people, their cultures and their beliefs. • Respect the environment • It is important to respect everything in nature that God has made.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone should be able to be themselves. • We should be respecting each other and the differences that we have. • At our school we are encouraged to be ourselves and have our own opinions and to be respectful of others opinions. • My brother has some trouble with his behaviour and his anger. The teachers in aspect (<i>sic</i>) and the teachers at St Mary's always help him. They are kind to him and always look out for him. He doesn't get in trouble for being different. • Kindness means: don't put yourself first, comfort people, include people in your games, don't judge people, show that you care, say nice things, try and make new friends, help people. • When I think about kindness I think about the story 'The Good Samaritan' that's in the Bible. I think that's what God wants for us, he wants us to be the good Samaritan. • Where we live this is not a lot of poor people, but we know in other places there are lots of poor people, in our country and in lots of countries around the world. We think that it is important that we donate money, clothes and food to those people who are poor and that don't have as good a life as we do.
Eucharist, Homily, Ash Wednesday, talking with father, baptism, reconciliation, singing in Church

I personally find the Novus Ordo Mass distracting and not conducive to silent, reflective adoration; therefore I have been guided, after much prayer and thought, to attend Mass in the Extraordinary Form.
A need for an awareness in parish communities that a growing percentage of people living in Australia do not have a Church background, and therefore find our expressions of faith confusing and full of jargon/practices that are barriers to them exploring faith. The challenge is to lovingly open our doors to walk with them in getting to know Jesus.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At confession, a priest advised me to see a counsellor, which helped me overcome depression. 2. I met a man who used to be Baptist and had become Catholic and wanted to be a priest. I asked him why he had converted, he said "the short answer is because Catholicism is true". 3. I followed Bishop Umbers to look at his memes, but ended up reading a book he recommended (Fun is not enough by Fr Cavanan) which helped me to understand problems with moral relativism. 4. I have been part of youth groups and men's groups that have been helpful for meeting other Catholics and talking about our faith. 5. The premarriage course my wife and I did with CatholicCare was helpful.
<p>I know we keep talking about the role of the priests—but to be honest they have an amazing power to build or demolish communities. When you experience a parish where everyone is included, valued, the laity are encouraged to be involved—not as "servants" to the priest but as valuable in their own right it can't help but grow. That only happens when it is nourished by the priest. The rules and regulations are so restricting. We are not living 1000 years ago, we are not living 100 years ago, we are not even living 20 years ago. We keep focusing on these rules that are man-made—"you can't have this song at your funeral", "you can't have this person as your Godparent". I don't think we need to throw the baby out with the bath water—but seriously! We want to call people to us—not turn them away. I had a friend who's children are at a Catholic school but who is not Catholic (Anglican/Cof E something—not sure) and so their child wasn't allowed to make their Confirmation unless the parents underwent RCIA and became Catholic. Wow. Way to make them feel welcome—so now that child won't make the sacramental journey that could have been the catalyst to his parents making that journey—or his children making that journey in 25 years' time. It's so rare these days to walk out of Church feeling inspired. It does happen—and I guess that's how you know it's not happening the rest of the time. I was on holidays at a parish where the PP threw open the Plenary Council question during his homily and everyone was sharing their ideas out loud with each other. There was obviously such a sense of trust in that community! They didn't all have the same ideas—there was quite a breadth—but they all felt confident to publicly state what they thought. The priest felt confident to hear it. The next week, when our group agreed we couldn't wait to go back to Mass (to see what would happen this week!) his homily wasn't interactive—but it was relevant—he used his own real life relatable experiences to draw parallels with the gospel—which was quite theological. He certainly didn't just "retell" it so I would understand. I get why people "shop around" to find a parish where they feel like they get to take a message away. My kids always came to Mass with us—late teens now. My son goes to the Anglican Church where they have a youth fellowship and he has made friends. I don't really care that he's not at the Catholic Church—I'm just happy he has a relationship with Jesus and a community of people who believe in Him. Isn't that the whole point?</p>
<p>The simplest witness of people of genuine faith has often enriched my faith life. I still vividly remember the warmth of a sign of peace given by a giggling twenty-something woman in the early 1970's, and hope that some of the faithful could do as much for today's unchurched.</p> <p>In the 1970's, before the litigation became so popular, all parish work was voluntary, and thanks for the generosity of many abounded. Today money is the standard form of thanks, reducing the value of sincere and generous words and the actions which follow them. Even in my own case, the apparent prevalence of manipulative officials has promoted a sceptical approach to once highly</p>

valued promises, verbal guarantees and sincere appreciations. I believe the Spirit is calling our society to be more honest in our words, so they can resume their potential as a unifying force in community.

It made me leave, due to said intolerance by the more conservative sect and their imaginary war against things which don't exist. I was on the rocks before that in all honesty, but the refusal on the same sex marriage vote by the Church and the backstabbing of the Church goers made me question why I even went to aid anyone there. I was just over the hypocritical nature of people and especially with most who claim religion to mask their own bigotry. Timeline-wise *that's last. In May, things started to get bad. Then it was the youth festival where my concerns were reinforced about the lack of response.*

This is the experience which has prompted my response to the first question above. I have recently completed, with the help of a spiritual director, one of the First Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius. This has amplified and focused what had been growing for some time, namely, a sense of God's having acted in my life to bring about positive changes, changes that I may not even have thought necessary and certainly did not plan or actively strive for. The Spiritual Exercise led me to recall my experiences of being loved by others and how I have responded to this, and to be more aware of the gifts I have been given. The love of God is now more something I feel rather than just know as an article of faith. The overall effect on me has been one of such great joy and gratitude that I would like others to have this experience. However, I realise that God manifests His presence in people's lives in many different ways, so my experience will not speak to everyone. Hence the need for people to discover for themselves, with whatever help can be given them, the presence of God in their lives.

As a married couple with young children (and adding more regularly until there were 6) I lived in the parish of [-], [-] ACT. That formed my ideal of parish: a warm community with many, many people participating eagerly in parish activities. There were many new mothers receiving meals, elderly people to be helped to appointments, a lively liturgy which everyone enjoyed, well-attended activities to promote our faith, children playing around after Sunday Mass while their parents chatted, a primary school integrated into the parish, an active Parish Council, which discerned the needs of the parish so that they could assist the parish priest. We were without a priest for some months when he suffered heart severe problems but between the experienced parishioners, a priest who lived in the Presbytery but was hospital chaplain, not attached to the parish, and visiting priests to help with Sunday Masses, we hardly missed a beat—though we were pleased to welcome him back on his recovery. So what was the secret of this parish? I suggest it was a priest who listened to his people, discerned their needs and acted on what he heard; who was warm, democratic, and inclusive. As a result, the parishioners responded with wholehearted participation and helped each other both in their spiritual lives and in their very active family lives. I count myself lucky to have had that experience. Perhaps it was a function of the time and the place, and perhaps now it would not be possible to work in exactly that way, but I need to believe that my experience of vibrant and nourishing parish life is still possible in Australia.

Family and schooling were my great teachers. As always said, faith is caught not taught, but good solid lessons helped.

The school has been very welcoming and when we go to the [-] church, the priest is very good at explaining things and makes it more encouraging.

In Christian, non-Catholic faith arenas, unification and awakening in the Holy Spirit is a big thing. Multi-denominational gatherings are happening. Sharing tools, resources, prayer gatherings, worship sessions, this coming together has been happening for a while now to build a national and global Christian faith revival. I don't see the Catholic Church being amongst it at all. I have been in churches where the touch of the Holy Spirit has been very real, profound and powerful. If the Holy Spirit turned up in this fashion in the local Catholic church here, not only would the priest not know what to do with it, he'd would probably deny it was the Holy Spirit in the first place!

This group concentrated on considering women:

Person 1. Women are undervalued yet do most of the work, Irrational division/ no valuable reason, Not progressive. It is just not right. All equal in God's eyes.

Person 2. Many parishes across the country are poorly serviced due to the lack of priests. They celebrate Mass only every four to six weeks. Eventually the Church will lose the faithful living in country parishes. I feel many religious sisters are ready to be trained as deacons and they could act as parish administrators. They can conduct communion services on Sundays, prepare children for sacraments, conduct weddings hence keeping the faith alive.

Person 3. More equality with women within the Church. Women appointed as priests. This group considered decision-making structures within our Church.

Person 4. As a student (5-18) there were the expectations that one would fit in rigidly with what Church told us. Questions were not tolerated. Between 1969-1972, I studied to be a priest. I then made a huge decision to leave. My image of God as a LOVING one was not in the Church vernacular. Now, I want a Church which is a community in action- knowing each other, supporting each other: THAT would shoe the wider world what it means to be a disciple. Conversion/old sense of mission is NOT what evangelisation is about.

Person 5. The hierarchy of the Church has been a catalyst in enabling the sexual abuse atrocities that have occurred within it. Those in positions of leadership were able to dismiss reports of these abuses and those who were accountable hid behind the cloth of power. Those in high positions have alienated people who were searching for God and a place to belong. Still today, those in power are trying to silence people who voice their concerns.

This group considered forgiveness:

Person 6. Individually we need to reflect on our past, what we have done which we could do better. Ask for forgiveness in our minds from those we have hurt by what we have said or done. Forgive ourselves for the errors we have made. In our communities, forgive others when things happen because of issues they are facing. Isn't it wonderful that our government has been forthcoming in saying sorry to the Indigenous, to those who have faced sexual and domestic violence? I felt they gave these affected people some peace and closure. We need to support as much as we can. Our criminal system should focus on forgiving those who committed crimes not punish them.

Person 7. I forgive those who have hurt me but most of all, I need to forgive myself to be able to move on and set the right example for my own children so that they can always find it in their hearts to forgive also ... Isn't that one of Jesus' central messages?

Person 8. Don't bear grudges as individuals and as a Church. Don't be jealous or envious.

Remember EVERYONE is created in love, in the image of God.

Person 9. My thoughts and experience of forgiveness: Victor Frankl forgiving

Disconnection in the Church as priests are not always considerate and able to understand the situations of people today. The Church seems superficial in what it should be preaching and contradicts itself, e.g. Asylum seekers.

People voting with their feet , non-attendance to Church

Priest berating individuals, guilt, fire and brimstone, priest told a domestic violence victim that if she left the Church she would be excommunicated, a musician was told to leave the music group because they were too loud, student that wants to be a priest but won't because he wants to be married, refusal to baptise a child because of same sex marriage, crying babies sent from the church.

Living together: the couple was refused marriage. A priest was on the School Board but now he is in jail, a partner wanted to become a Catholic and they made it extremely difficult, science and religion understanding.

Baptism, when my uncle was in primary school, the brothers/priests would take them on camps and molested them.

My faith journey changed significantly after attending the 2005 World Youth Day in Cologne. My experience of prayer and joyous celebration at WYD was an incredible encounter with God that was life forming. This experience and the amazing clergy I travelled with brought me back to regular Mass attendance and involvement in parish life. The problem is that the experience of my faith in my parish does not resemble that joyous encounter. Most priests who are celebrating Mass do not make it a celebration. The homilies do not reflect the love God has for us but rather feels like we are ticking a box to say yes, I have been to Mass this week. Formation of priests need a significant review and priests need regular positive feedback to help them in their difficult and demanding role.
I have been shaped by being a student, teacher and parent of Catholic education for 42 years. My experiences of the Church have been varied, however, they have become less positive over time. I have seen too much negativity, too much disrespect, too much entitlement, dis empowerment, judgement and total disregard for people. The majority of this treatment has come from priests, who have run the Church as if they are in a military operation. While rites and rituals have a place, so does having compassion and temperance.
Until such time as the Church leadership/hierarchy is open to women, nothing it says about morality and equality has authenticity and integrity.
I am an IVF baby and learning that the Church doesn't accept that and thinks it's a sin is terrible. I've been a member of my Church my whole life and spent many hours in there, the fact that someone is made because their parents are physically unable is not a good concept and driving away your believers. The Church should accept anyone no matter who they are, Jesus had dinner and talked with prostitutes, beggars, tax collectors, lepers, and we can't accept someone because they were artificially fertilised? Most the food we eat is artificially fertilised or manipulated in some way, and we still accept that. So why can't the Church accept its believers no matter who they are?
Our story is an amalgam of parishioners who meet regularly (for some years) to study scripture and contemporary issues.
I was born into the Church, educated within the Church and played an extremely active part in the Church for over 50 years. I was also involved with another community organisation during some this period. When the horror of child abuse in our community came to light, I questioned both the Church and the other organisation as to how they were going to deal with the issue. The other organisation came up with an absolute policy for dealing with it. The Church turned its back and refused to face reality. It wasn't hard to decide which organisation to walk away from.
My faith is important to me and has been since I was a child. It is my relationship with God and He has always been there for me in times of need. I continually need his help and I feel comfort just sitting in a Church. I don't understand how some people say they don't need God in their life ... maybe their test is still to come!
There are kids groups, youth groups, seniors groups but as far as I am aware not much for middle-aged single adults. I am a practising Catholic—fairly “straight down the line” including such things as attendance at Sunday Mass. I would have liked to meet other adult single Catholics to share time and interests and even perhaps remarried a Catholic man (I was married in my 20s and then had an annulment). However, I have never found any mechanisms in the Church or parishes I have been involved with to assist or encourage this socialising for adults.
I left the priesthood to marry and would still be a priest if I could share my vocation with my wife and family.
The most memorable moment spiritually speaking was when my parents decided to make the effort to take the family to monthly confession. It was a big deal as we lived in the country where public transport was bad and priests not so available. They drove us to the Church every first Saturday for this purpose. It was nerve racking to begin with but the priest was so patient to help me make a good confession. I am very grateful for this. It was like a huge weight removed from me and a deep joy and happiness filled me. I will never forget those times. It helped me to

eventually go to confession weekly and Mass daily as I grew to appreciate and want a closer relationship with God. I have always had a great love for the sacraments and any initiatives that promote this for people. Not long ago I heard of a priest in Europe who decided to promote Confession by converting a big bus into a mobile confessional. What a great idea!! If we are to all reach heroic sanctity we all need a good dose of grace!

Faithful practicing Catholic, married 32 years, 5 kids and 10 years volunteering as a Catechist in public schools.

I was very disturbed to hear the parish priest in one of his sermons, referring to a baptismal service as just only a "symbol". It came across that he was consciously and deliberately pretending to celebrate a modified sacrament and in doing so effectively teach heresy. All these changes contain and express another religion. These types of happening are imposed on us from top down. Those of us who want to practice our Faith have no option. Let us not become insensitive to sacrilege. Until the revolting 60's, sacrilege was seen for what it is. It is a most grievous offence against God. He gave us the canonized Mass and the sacraments, not symbols. Christ is with his Church but not with an evil one. St Jerome contented that in his days, more than 50% of bishops denied the divinity of Christ. Keep in mind that any part of an existential Church is not necessarily Christ's Church. So what is it? We want our Traditional Roman Catholic Church free from any new religions. It is an urgent task for the Plenary Council to repair and make sure to have valid licit and edifying sacraments to honour their membership into only One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in spirit and in truth. Also to be free from any fraudulently new unnamed religions. Let us make this crisis known and recognised, to dogmatically resolve this and other grave issues of our day. Vague permissions do not make what is "invalid", valid. After all Divine Liturgy is and consists in worshipping God the way God wants to be worshipped. Contrary to the "semper ubique idem" Catholic religion, then that sacrament is a sacrilege and becomes invalid, e.g.: a baptismal minister who merely intends to join the baptised to the "community", is not "semper ubique idem". Leonine Principle reminds us that any significant change in any of these areas indicates the presence of a false religious sacramental intention which invalidates that sacrament. The form determines the intention and the intention determines the form. I support the Plenary Council in order to resolve these grave issues dogmatically.

I have been brought up in a faith-filled family. We say a daily rosary. I attend daily Mass. I have been encouraged to do spiritual reading which has helped me understand my faith. I teach at a school which offers daily Confession and Mass. The Catholic faith is taught unashamedly. Religious practice such as Eucharistic Processions and Rosary Pilgrimages are an annual event. The students are encouraged to do charitable works from a very young age and to live the virtues.

I thought that I had done a good job as a priest of speaking about prayer and exhorting people to pray. But a recent experience showed me how far short I had fallen: I received a Jesuit Tertian into my parish to lead people in a short 4 weeks experience of Ignatian spiritual exercises. He was accompanied by some lay volunteers who assisted him. Fr Michael Hansen SJ's "First Spiritual Exercises" was used as a manual. I took part in a group also. In these groups people were scaffolded in deep affective prayer. They were taught how to truly pray, and given a place to share the fruit of their prayer. I saw people break through and pray in new ways, experience God in new ways and understand God in new ways. I have led groups of people in these First Spiritual Exercises myself since, and seen the same result. It reinforces my conviction of the power of ministering to adults in small groups in a way which is Christ focused and affective.

I'm currently a practicing Catholic. My wife and I attend Mass every weekend and I can't help but notice that almost everyone around us is older and that there are very few young people in attendance. I stopped attending church for 20 years when I was in my 30s and 40s and attendance at a third rite ceremony helped to bring me back. When I was a young man I didn't think it possible that I would not see married priests and women priests in my lifetime. I'm totally astounded that we haven't moved on this. With a declining number of vocations, there's your simple answer, it's staring you in the face.

When I first came to Australia many years ago I did not speak English at all. I went to Mass on Sunday but I could not receive Holy Communion because I could not go to Confession. But at Communion time I wanted to receive the Lord so much I tasted it in my mouth as if I had received it. I will never forget that. I was 19 years old.
There have been many priests who have inspired me with their Homilies. My old Anglican rector [-], Bishop [-]when he was a priest in [-], Fr [-], Fr [-], Fr [-], Fr [-]from St [-] [-]. All of these priests regularly give homilies that are about love of others, thought-provoking, relevant to today, the Gospel and uplifting. After attending their Masses, I leave Mass feeling positive and rejuvenated.
My faith has helped me through difficult times in my life. Being involved in the music ministry has especially helped to strengthen my faith.
My son-in-law belongs to the Uniting Church but was not allowed to receive communion on his wedding day but both my daughter and son-in-law can receive communion in the Uniting Church. Recently they attended a session for the baptism of their little baby. They were upset with the way it was presented, it should have forced on it being a Sacrament of Initiation and a welcoming into the Christian faith.
No story, but observations when, with friends, I visit other Christian communities who seem to do it better. The Uniting Church builds wonderful community centres with something useful/social/artistic/outreaching for every age group. Baptist Church I observed had strong young presence, mainly Asian.
I have attended a centre of Opus Dei since I was a little girl. The care they take of their youth there really inspired me in my Faith. They helped to foster my vocation, they taught me to pray, they gave me formation classes about how to actually live out the Faith relevant to current society. I also attend [-], an Opus Dei school, in which we are taught Catholic doctrine including: history of the Church, social justice issues, Church's stand on controversial issues and why?, the life of Jesus, interior spiritual life. I have also attended silent retreats in which I have better learnt to know myself and created a relationship with Jesus. My parents have also been so supportive of my Faith, we attend daily Mass at our parish and my school also offers daily Mass.
When I was young both of my parents raised me to go to Church on Sundays and sent me to a Catholic school that held strong beliefs in my faith. My school provided me with daily Mass and held retreats. Another was going to this Ignite camp which held numerous talks and had a large number of youth there. This experience made me realize that there are actually other youths out there that believe in the same thing I do and we can freely express and celebrate it in a comfortable space unlike when in public where my thoughts and morals are seen controversial.
One of the many encounters of faith I have had was reading an 'iPray' booklet. These booklets have passages and stories from the Bible with an explanation and ways we can live out these readings every day. It was one a random day when I read it, I generally do not have much time in the mornings to read it but I did on this day and I felt that it completely explained and related to what I was experiencing at that time and it helped me understand that what I was experiencing had also been experienced by many people and it was a challenge that is able to be overcome. This reading also helped me and challenged me to live that day, and many more after, as an imitation of Jesus and love others as he did. It helped me live out my values and morals and show others more of the love that I have for them.
My parents are Catholics and I was baptised into the Church. Since birth, I have been taught the Catholics teachings and have developed a strong love for God. I have been brought up in a quite Catholic community where we come together every month to do a 2000 Hail Marys. I also receive education at an Opus Dei school which teaches proper Catholic religion lessons. My family go to together to Mass every Sunday. I also go to a Catholic youth group where we profess our love for Christ together and grow together in our faith. My family actively tries to hold up and communicate Catholic opinions to others for example, attending same sex marriage debates and walks etc.

<p>In an Opus Dei retreat, one certain confession I had with a priest was very comforting for me. I truly accepted that I was a Child of God and he loved me no matter how many times I failed. Sometimes I still feel like it's embarrassing to go to confession but that is all God wants us to do, to keep trying to get to Heaven.</p>
<p>The University of Notre Dame gives a philosophy and ethics course (Logos) for people in senior high school. The Catholic professors strengthened my faith through explaining how the Church derived its philosophies from Aristotle/St Thomas Aquinas etc. Through understanding theories and beliefs from their underlying premises, I understood why we believe the things we do and live our lives according to them. After studying metaphysics, it struck me as very sad and worrisome that many people will never study or look into this subject, which applies so importantly to how we live our lives. It also gave me motivation and curiosity to further investigate the Catholic faith. By understanding the reasons behind rules/beliefs, it encourages people and gives them strength and pride in living them.</p>
<p>Faith has been an important part of my life and my family, however one of the most significant experiences I have had is the service project that I went on to the Philippines. During this project we attended Mass everyday with other students and families from the school at which we were staying, and it was incredible to see the strength of their devotion and faith, even though some of them live in poor conditions and are victims of poverty. They find such comfort and fulfilment in prayer, and witnessing this influenced my own perspective of prayer and the role that it plays in my life.</p>
<p>I was grown up in a practising Catholic family, my parents taught me how to pray and how to overcome any issues or questions I faced about the Church. I also had priests at my school that cared deeply about my wellbeing and talked to me about any issues I faced.</p>
<p>What many consider old fashioned is what I consider freedom. The Church's teaching gives the individual freedom and strength. I became formally a Catholic at the age of 65 and it gave me strength and freedom. Probably the most important part of my life. Before this I brought up my children as Catholics even that I couldn't converse earlier myself.</p>
<p>I am embarrassed about the woeful state of the Catholic Church in the world. Allow Pope Francis to speak openly and from the heart. Get rid of the BOYS' CLUB syndrome mentality. Give women equal opportunity into positions of power in Church hierarchy. Get rid of the narrow-minded thinking associated with bishops and priests.</p>
<p>A comment from one of our group's son: Why does the council matter? The hierarchy will not listen to us anyway. As a woman, I do not feel embraced by the Church especially when marriage and divorce is acknowledged by the state but not by the Church. We do not have to earn God's love but the Church makes us feel like we do. Experience of generational hurt by the Church, not allowing my grandparents a Catholic and a non-Catholic to marry in the Church. My grandmother thinking she had been excommunicated and getting married again fifty three years later, when she was dying.</p>
<p>The dedication of priests in general in administering the sacraments is very edifying. I know someone who had decided to be Catholic just because of the example of good Catholics.</p>
<p>The experience of being involved in non-Catholic communities is a meeting of like-minded people for connection, for love, fun, caring for each other. We should learn from other Churches. The Chinese Mass in our parish is welcoming and kindly and reverent, they make you feel welcome. Building community with a local Uniting Church, a fundraising project called [-] we do together, Parish of [-], working to build a community by bringing all ages together both spiritually and socially, Celebrations at [-] at Easter and Christmas gives an opportunity for parishioners to meet a wider range of people, especially those who only come to Mass on special occasions, sacramental programs bring parents together, Observation: joy is not radiated from within the community - Early Church communities were on fire—we coast along—need to create a spiritual community, Parents are overwhelmed with life, find it difficult to get to Mass. The monthly Mass at [-] and dinner afterwards is a good way to bring the community together. We need different</p>

liturgies because there are fewer and fewer priests—it is not good to bring priests to Australia who cannot be understood because they struggle with English.
My parents' marriage has always been a rock in my life. Their togetherness and fidelity was unquestionable and gave me a firmness and stability which I will be forever grateful. It was also seeing them fight for the family, the faith, and what was true and beautiful, constantly making decisions that would bring us closer to God as a family. Sometimes those decisions were tough and hard, we were the odd ones out, but in that I learnt that some things were not negotiable i.e. our faith and family. We learnt we had to be prepared to suffer for the truth if necessary. I saw my parents make decisions which meant the family suffered economic loss and social deprivations because of it. I am very grateful for this and for their courage to stand up for what was right. Parents today need help to raise a family. There are many challenges and some have come from broken families, or find the environment very toxic. I have been very impressed with an organization in Australia called Family Enrichment Australia (FEA) run by couples who volunteer their time to run marriage and parenting courses and help many other families. One couple I know reluctantly attend the Marriage Weekend. Afterwards they were so happy as their marriage was close to failure. The course helped them start again.
I was actually shaped many years ago by a priest of Opus Dei who helped me to face my life and come back to the sacraments. We need many such conversions as the average Catholic in Australia does not take his/her faith seriously. I think the main enemy is the lack of doctrine and general confusion. The scandals in the Church have not helped much either.
Holy priests have emphasised the value of the sacramental life and helped me appreciate the inestimable value of Holy Mass and the sacraments to my life.
One member of the group spoke about his involvement in a thirty-day Ignatian Spirituality program which he found very beneficial for deepening his spiritual life. A course in miracles has inspired and deepened another person's spirituality. We can have blessings on all God's children: not defined by sexual orientation but by love of God—but we need to be an inclusive Church, where everyone is welcome regardless of their sexual orientation. Remove discrimination against divorced and same sex couples. Praying to Our Lady of Fatima and saying the rosary began when the woman was a young girl because her sister, who as a young woman contracted poliomyelitis and was unable to continue her nursing training, had come back to live with the family in the country. The statue of Our Lady of Fatima came to the parish of the family and her younger sister visited the statue and prayed for her to be cured. This was in spite of being instructed by the nun to pray for the conversion of the world. The next day her older sister stood up, took off her callipers and walked unaided and was able to complete her nursing training and then joined a nursing order of nuns. The devotion to Our Lady of Fatima and saying the rosary daily has continued from that time and throughout a marriage of about sixty years.
For the past few years I have been discerning a vocation to religious life. This discernment has been greatly assisted by the Catholic Society and Catholic Chaplaincy at my university. The experiences I have had with the Catholic Society and Chaplaincy have been very formative, and helped to encourage me in my faith journey as there are few to no young people at my local parish. Similarly, attending traditional parishes have also helped greatly in my faith journey, and there one can find entire communities of young people and young families, and they are truly the future of the Church in Australia, not only in my experience, but in the experience of many other young Catholics.
The lack of relevance of the Church to active social justice has shaped my atheism. If the Catholic Church really fired its millions of followers to be an active voice for justice, it would change the world. But no, it is more concerned with mediocrity and money. Example, one Sunday I attended Mass at [-] held by a true priest, a maverick at ease with justice for those suffering racism, discrimination, poverty. It was like a pit stop to fuel up with genuine rights issues action for the week. Out of curiosity, I attended evening Mass the same day, same reading at my local Church in my street. YAWN. The homily was ALL about raising money for the school. This is the norm ...

<p>boring homilies that demean and deflate the Word of God and the human spirit. The reason the Catholic Church overcame paganism in Timor Leste was because the Church boldly championed independence, and back in the day, the Catholic Church in Ireland became the state Church because it was active in resistance and the struggle for independence. Popes JP II and Benedict crucified Jesus in the form of social justice i.e. Liberation Theology and since then, the top trickle down of active love and justice for the suffering Other has dried up. Now the self-prosperity-centred evangelists have taken hold in South America and here, reflecting the elitist greed of the world's right wing. The Church must stand with, speak up LOUDLY, DOGGEDLY for our First Nations peoples, and the suffering Other in West Papua, Palestine, Western Sahara, Kashmir, Tibet, the Philippines, etc. etc. Not to mention protecting God's creation from climate change. You can count on one hand the number of clergy attending justice rallies ... the clergy is invisible really.</p>
<p>I have three adult children who have been educated in Catholic schools and taken to Mass every Sunday of their youth. None of them are practising Catholics. They do not recognise any relevance for them today. They find the liturgy boring and uninspiring. I cannot draw their non-Catholic partners into a Church that is so bogged down with inflexible rules. I feel that women have a great deal to offer in the Church and are being held back by old-fashioned paternalistic attitudes. I was not sexually abused as a child but I certainly suffered an enormous amount of physical and psychological abuse at the hands of the nuns who taught me. In some cases they were downright cruel and violent. My husband was once a priest and we both have grave concerns (through what we have witnessed first hand) at the damaging effects that celibacy has on the psychological wellbeing of priests. It is high time for a change.</p>
<p>Not sure that we want to bring back everything about the Church of my childhood through the 1950s, but in those times not only was the level of education in Christian doctrine and observance very strong, families generally had a strong commitment to the Faith which in most cases they passed on to their offspring. Absolute antithesis of today.</p>
<p>My positive experience was when I took my family to [-] in the [-] NSW where the parish had lay leadership supported by priests who genuinely worked within their community. Compare that to turning up to a presbytery door to enrol my son in a Catholic school to be greeted by two savage dogs and a drunken priest who dismissed me. How has it showed me? I don't trust what it says it's offering.</p>
<p>I grew up Catholic and my children went to Catholic school. My parents were cared for by the Catholic Church. I do appreciate all the good that came from these and am very grateful. I have become increasingly disillusioned with the Church recently and since my beloved Mum and Aunty died, I rarely attend Mass. I am active in SJaTB and am increasingly turning to Amnesty International to campaign for justice due to the issues I have outlined above. Many thanks.</p>
<p>I feel for the victims and will never send my children to a Catholic youth camp or have them in a vulnerable position with a priest.</p>
<p>My own personal experience of faith has always been positive. We have, wherever we have lived had good priests as shepherds. Yet it has been through Our Lady that my true conversion was initiated and sustained. Through her, I truly learned to pray with the heart. This has been the case for many Catholics since the 1987 Marian year instituted by St John Paul II.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cenacle prayer. This was the prayer that brought me closer to God at the beginning stage after being baptised at 30 years old for a few years. With the faith witnesses from the people who came to this Rosary group, they inspired me what true faith was. 2. I joined a Catholic group for young adults where I've made friends with the same faith and similar circumstances when I was 28 years old. They become a supportive backbone to my life so far. 3. I excel in faith since I've received doctrinal formation often together with mental prayers. 4. I love the peace and joy received after confession.

I don't have a particular story to share. However, I went to a Christian Brothers School in Sydney for 10 years. I was impressed by many teachers at that school, but especially by many (not all) of the Christian Brothers there. They gave up their adult lives to teaching children for little or no material reward. However, the impressive ones were also excellent teachers, and excellent human beings, who made learning a very satisfactory and enjoyable experience for their students. It's a great pity that the reputation of the Christian Brothers as a whole has been destroyed by the misconduct of some of their number.

I am so concerned for our Church that my experience of faith is between myself and God. I am rapidly losing respect and faith in priests and Church. My faith and hope is for this plenary council to resurrect our Church, God/the Holy Spirit are waiting for us.

What happens inside Catholic parishes nowadays bears no resemblance to wider society's perception of the Church. The Church has lost trust as an institution. It will only regain that trust by returning to the Gospel, faithfully. Rebuilding Catholic communities so that they can shine the light of Christ outward, to the rest of the world, and rebuild the trust that is broken is my hope for the future.

Going to Church was an amazing experience for me for so long with priest Fr [-] when he was at [-] parish. After he left, Church became more of a chore, and the new bishop, Bishop [-], became so insulting with his homily that I was allowed to not return to the Church at 16. The bishop used to condemn homosexuality, the rights of women, and all things, which I stood for. Sometimes I was left so angry I wanted to stand up and scream at him but obviously I felt that would be inappropriate in the House of God. After leaving the parish, I tried Pentecostalism which was a lot more engaging, but lacked the roots of my Catholic upbringing. Right now I feel stuck as the Church is so unwelcoming to women and young people right now that I feel I cannot be myself in the House of my Lord, despite God only having made good. Please resurrect my faith, with the Holy Spirit of Jesus.

Last year I was challenged by our local Anglican Minister about several aspects of our faith—primarily purgatory, confession and the Eucharist. During a series of coffee meetings, we talked over these things. Thankfully, I was able to provide theologically sound explanations about these aspects of our Catholic belief. The exchanges motivated me to explore our faith more: I spoke with friends who I know to be strongly formed in their Catholic faith and read a number of books. As a consequence of this experience I was reminded of how fortunate we are as Catholics to have the sacraments, how theologically well-reasoned they are and the importance of making them accessible through religious formation. Indeed, when I went to Mass the following Sunday I was moved very powerfully when receiving the Eucharist; feeling truly engaged with Jesus at the Last Supper and a very much deeper appreciation for the sacrament. That has remained with me each and every time I go to Communion. It was something I always considered important and special but now I truly feel the presence and Grace of God. A similar experience followed with the sacrament of Confession. Sometimes it seems that our sacraments are the Church's best kept secret! If we and our children are properly formed I believe that the tide would turn on many of the challenges facing our Church such a low Mass attendance rates and low engagement with the sacraments and that we would be better equipped to deal with external challenges such as the march of secularism and consumerism. The sacraments are the portal through which our loving God invites us to experience His Grace. Whilst I am but part of the way down my journey of faith, I am grateful to have had the benefit of religious formation through the efforts of a loving Mother in the home, devoted teachers and religious at school, diligent clergy at Mass, the opportunity to learn and read more as an adult—at times largely due to the encouragement of others—and of course the Grace of God. It is against the background of that experience that I ask the Plenary Council to place the issue of religious formation prominently on its agenda.

Without my belief, I don't know if I would have got through my difficult times, my depression. If we can but listen, we realise God is carrying us through it ... but the challenge is listening in our technology-driven world!

-Crossroads is a pro-life walk from Brisbane and Melbourne that occurs in January to February every year. I did it last year and it changed my life forever. I fell so in love with prayer, saying the rosary and the Divine Mercy Chaplet. I developed a passion for building a culture of life in Australia and throughout the world.

-I recently discovered the Opus Dei group Eremeran. It is exactly what I needed! I love how we can be called to live the will of God in everyday life. To live united to God in the midst of the world in any situation. We struggle to be better with the help of grace and to make Jesus known with the testimony of our lives. I think a lot of young people can relate to wanting to do this. For the vast majority of us, we aren't called to be sisters or priests. Instead, we are called to live the vocation of married or single life in the world and learning how to do this is so important.

-World Youth Day Panama! I recently came back and am SO spiritually on fire! I'm sharing my story with my whole faith community and I hope that all young people in Australia and throughout the world have the opportunity to deepen their relationship with Christ and the global Catholic community through World Youth Day.

Twining of our parishes was devastating. Foreign orders and to a lesser extent foreign priests have their own cultures and expectations. When there is no on-site priest, no interaction in the school and playground, difficulty in understanding accents, boring paraphrasing the readings in homilies, what hope is there for the little children?

I have been fortunate to experience a homily where the priest rather than preach came down to the community with the microphone and basically shared how the Gospel spoke to him today, and then he asked parishioners for their thoughts and got some to share. On that day I got the most I had ever got because the priest showed he valued his community rather than preaching like he thought he was better than anyone sitting in the pews.

We have just been to World Youth Day in Panama and are very energized by the experiences we have had. We experienced vibrant music, engaged young people and excellent homilies. We believe that parishes could become vibrant communities of faith and that this would engage more people our age.

I am involved in music ministry in our local Churches over the last decade, which has been both very rewarding and a huge battle. I've seen priests come and go, destroy communities by their patriarchal attitudes and others build them up. I've seen wonderful well-meaning folk totally destroyed by priests who wanted power and badly handled situations. I've also seen good priests working well to build communities. I've worked in communities where there have been foreign (mainly Indian priests) for a number of years. All are lovely but language has been a huge barrier and poor cultural connection. The sermons are more often than not hard to follow or coming from a different cultural perspective that is hard to relate to. Not encouraging for anyone. Only involvement in a relatively vibrant music ministry has kept me sane and attending Mass and having wider involvement in my community only. Personally, I have discovered and now engage in online ministry resources e.g. Word on Fire Institute for nurturing my faith development and seeking relevance and ongoing support for my faith today. It is a hostile world out there and the local Church needs to step up to face this reality. Start by creating the space for our communities to develop at a parish level. Transparency and more democratic engagement between laity and priests is a must.

Having been in the same parish for over 50 years we've seen a number of parish priests come and go. Three attracted a good congregation—two because of their short, interesting homilies and one young priest who was dynamic in his pastoral care. He attracted young families and a youth group and set us up for the parish merger we knew was coming. He was moved and unfortunately the merger was very badly handled. Now we are left with foreign priests whose ability to adapt to and understand Australian parish life varies. One wanted only men to have their feet washed on Holy Thursday (didn't happen fortunately). Homilies are far too long and any good points are lost in the overall length. Meetings and some special weekday Masses are timed for 7pm—not a family-friendly time. The choir has diminished due to ageing and ill health and the hymns are too

often very old fashioned. A Liturgy Committee no longer exists. Parishioners have left in droves and as a result we are left with a dwindling, ageing congregation.
I have always had a very positive experience of the Catholic Church in Australia but these days I am often appalled by what I would call an anti-Catholic attitude of some people I meet in the congregations.
I was fortunate enough to have met many faithful of the Church because I was involved with the Church youth activities at my local Church. These activities were not and are still not well advertised. I attended these activities only because I was actively seeking to join a youth group. I am also fortunate that I received formation at a young age. The point is that more formation to kids should be provided in schools and Sunday classes.
We arrived from another country to Australia twenty-eight years ago looking for a vibrant Catholic community. Disappointed we left, then felt the need to come back and try again. The parish priest at the time made it very difficult for us to be a part of our parish. My son was fearful of him and we felt unwelcome. He left and the new PP had a totally different attitude—glad to see us, welcoming, open and relaxed. He introduced us to members of the local Spanish community. We attend their Masses now and feel connected to this community. We enjoy celebrating our faith among like-minded people and my son is enjoying participating in the music ministry. As a priest, I was used to a vibrant, young and responsive community in my country. In coming to Australia, I did not find that the Australian congregations had these qualities and it was very challenging and different. I celebrate Masses that include Australian and cultural groups and feel much more at home with the cultural groups. It is difficult to connect or feel a response from the Australian congregations. We are multicultural but we are not intercultural. I was part of another parish and was looking for something more for my family. I wanted something to inspire their faith and mine. Moving back to [-] meant we were able to attend this parish at a time when a dynamic, inspiring priest who led a vibrant and engaged community was appointed and we made our spiritual home here. My wife and I and my children made many friends in this parish as a result. Over the years, different experiences have caused us to long for the days we experienced when we first came. Our strong friendships and commitment from those early days has helped us keep going.
I am very grateful to my parents for passing the faith onto me, and to the priests and parishes, of which I have been a part, for helping me to grow in love and understanding. I can safely say that the majority of priests I have known are very good. Unfortunately, I have experienced situations where certain Catholic institutions have failed in their duty of care to me, as a young woman, and as a parent, and were definitely responsible in part for things I should not have done.
I am grateful for the parish priests at St Agatha's Pennant Hills who celebrate the sacraments, offer 1st Friday Exposition of the blessed sacrament, and encourage the sacraments to be lived well. I am also particular blessed by the opportunity of my children to be in a PARED school where they are well-formed. The primary school kids attend Mass once a week, while high school kids have the opportunity to attend daily. There is confession daily (30 mins before school and 30 mins after school) for students and parents. There is the Eucharistic procession annually and Marian pilgrimages. The older children have opportunity for service projects. Once a month, there is a 90 minute recollection evening for men and women separately ending with benediction. I work at Randwick and am blessed with lunchtime midday Mass which helps nourish my life.
I have had many good experiences with good and holy priests.
Engagement at the superficial levels not successful. For example, in an effort to engage the students at a Catholic girls school one of us attended, the teachers placed glitter in the ashes on Ash Wednesday. We believe this undermines the fundamental spiritual traditions of the Church and makes religious practice trivial.
Teenagers in Australia don't go to Church. WHY? My teenagers go to Church because I have asked them to follow me. They felt very bored and uninterested. Once, my daughter said, I don't see the point of coming to Church. Have I not done enough for my kids or the Church has not been

supportive on the teenagers. We came from Singapore and they were attending catechism on weekly basis (it's still boring for them but at least they attended)
Off topic: My father was born in Palestine, but this option is not available later in the submission framework.
<p>1. We have a very positive experience with our school chaplains in [-] and [-]. They are very well-formed, we can see they treat their vocation very seriously with the way they celebrate sacrament and their self-sacrifice to carry out their job, always available for confession and for spiritual directions. They offer Mass every day in the school. Our experience is all positive, we trust and love our priests. This has greatly helped the spiritual live of not only the student of the school but also the parents. Many of the lapsed Catholic in the school find their way back to the faith. Through their examples I am now very keen to deepen knowledge of my faith.</p> <p>2. We have seen the result of extensive formation happening in [-] and [-] in my own daughters and many of the friends. Both schools offer an authentic Catholic Teaching without any modification. All the teachers are well formed, practicing Catholics and believe what they are preaching. Mass was carried out daily for student, frequent confession is encouraged, class on virtue from Kindi to year 12 and community service program for all students. We believe that faith is alive and grow in the school community. Very impressive.</p> <p>3. The school also provides formation for parents as we believe the Parent is the primary educator for the children. The cooperation between school and parents works very well in our school. In addition, the school offers formation for the parents: parenting class that cover early year, middle year and teen, marriage projects, spiritual service for parents by our chaplain, spiritual formation with recollection and talk held at the school. Faith is truly alive at the school community. It was really encouraging to see most of parents at the school practice the faith and hold high the teaching of the Church without condition. Most of the families have a large number of children, attend daily Mass, are very well-formed in the faith, attend frequent confession. They are very cheerful people and very happy to share their faith with everybody. I come home to the Church after few years wandering around mainly because of the examples and friendship with these wonderful people.</p>
My husband and I have 6 children here on earth. We are very blessed. However, I lost another 7 babies to miscarriage, the last one 4 years ago. Despite medical investigations, there was no conclusive reason why. I knew that daily prayer and begging Our Lady for help to carry my children to full term was the only way out of this seemingly impossible situation. Her intercession to God help me deal with the hurt and disappoints each miscarriage brought. The regular, confidential sacrament of confession has helped me immeasurably to avoid despair during those times. It has also given me the tenacity to raise children in a very expensive city, Sydney and the patience and love to help them grow into sound citizens. The oldest is 14, the youngest 6. I pray and thank God for them every day. Countless benefits have been given to my larger family. I am now the aunty to 31 nieces and nephews, (under 17) because of the generosity of their parents, inspired by my own family and their love of family life. I pray for you and for positive resolutions from this council.
I happily attended a Catholic Girls' School in [-] and received a very good education, albeit a traditional "Catholic" one. I began to question my faith over the issue of contraception as a young married woman and as a working mother I developed an interest in feminism and deplored the fact that women had no voice in the Church. However, I stuck with the Church when I found the Passionist-led parish at [-] in [-]. Here I was very involved with the Family Groups that were begun by Fr [-] and was an active member of the community, serving on the parish Council, etc. This parish is now run by Indian priests who I cannot understand and I feel totally alienated from the Church. The problem could be solved by having women priests and married clergy.
Went to an all boys' Jesuit boarding school in [-] and never saw or had any bad experience not to say they didn't happen there.

Family—My mother was a faithful Catholic, had seven children of whom I was the eldest. Her parents and my father were indifferent about the Faith but I saw how it inspired and sustained her through many challenging situations. She was a great role model. Also I was taught by the Sisters of Charity in Ashfield and several of the nuns were very strong in passing on their faith. I left school in 1963, so I received a faithful and thorough formation and this stood many of us in good stead for the rocky years following Vatican II when many of the Council's teachings threw up confusion due to misinterpretation. I have always been a practicing Catholic but did stop going to Sunday Mass on a regular basis for about 2- 3 years in the late 1970s when my children were pre-schoolers, largely due to their poor behaviour in Church. However we resumed the faithful practice of the Faith once they were both at school, including attending weekday Mass whenever I could manage it. I knew that passing on the Faith was the best gift I could give my children to help them through life. The Rosary around 1990—I was strongly influenced by the Faith of very close friends who went through a huge financial reversal, losing their house, etc. etc. but received great strength in their ordeal through renewed devotion to Our Lady by praying the Rosary which I also began to pray after many years, mainly out of solidarity and sympathy with them in their calamitous situation. It had been decades since I'd prayed the Rosary and my first reaction when my friend told me they were praying it was an incredulous, "What!! The whole Rosary!!" However turning to God through His Mother was really helping them and soon I saw so many benefits in my own family's life, especially the continued devotion to and practice of the Faith by my children on leaving school between 1991 and 1995. Our Lady I believe Our Lady helped us greatly to remain faithful and to deepen our relationship with her Son. Through praying more I felt much closer to Our Lord and also a great love for his Vicar on earth at that time, St. John Paul II. I saw women priests as a natural progression of equal rights for women but as soon as I realised the Pope said it could not be I accepted this unequivocally. Opus Dei—Also I went, very reluctantly I must say, to a Talk on John Paul II's encyclical, Veritatis Splendor, at [-] school for Girls, with presentations given by the Chaplain and Principal ... I was in reluctance because I had heard so much negative propaganda about Opus Dei and only attended because a good friend had been substitute teaching at [-] and was impressed with the orthodoxy and genuine love for the Faith she saw being passed on there. And this was reflected in the talks. Prior to this we'd attended a talk on the encyclical in [-] parish where many priests and religious were in attendance. We were very disturbed at the lack of unity with the Holy Father and obvious hostility to him.

I am very happy with the faith that Jesus Christ directed us to. He would not set up a structure that our man-made (bishops, etc.) have created. I cannot express how disappointed I am the Pope cannot change the mindset of the bishop gathering "They just do not get it". Of all the people on this earth, I thought he might be able to do it. He has failed. On top of this we have George Pell. Another disappointment. What can one say about this? We have been totally let down. Then we have a parish priest ([-]) convicted. All these things add up. When is someone going to say enough is enough? The management of the Catholic Church is totally dis-functional. I have seen so many dis-functional clergy rewarded while those that have not offended in the area of paedophilia, etc. have been ignored. This is a reflection of those protecting those who are similar. The management of the Catholic Church has a lot to answer for. They do not listen to the grass roots. What hope have we got when this feedback (Plenary feedback) is going to end up in the hand of bishops who have consistently let us down in the past. If I had some money to bet, I would put it all on the option of this Plenary Council failing the wishes of the Catholics in Australia.

Priests' sermons that are inspiring and challenge me to be better and to realise what's important. E.g. "the best thing you can give to your children is another brother or sister," and, "many people say they search for God but it's not about searching for Him, it's about getting rid of what isn't good in our lives so that God's voice can be heard," "selfishness destroys friendships marriages, relationships," "remember three things in any relationship—please, thank-you and sorry.

I have come back to the Church to help give my children a good moral and ethical basis to their upbringing and find our local [-] priest (Father [-]) a wonderful teacher in this respect. But my

concerns are for the wider Church. If it wasn't for Father [-] and his intelligence and tolerance, I am not sure I would have successfully returned.

My experience of faith and the reason I have kept my faith and grown in faith as a young adult started with my parents. My parents (not the 'Catholic' school I attended) taught me how to pray, how to love God, what God's laws are and WHY, and the teachings of the Catholic faith. When I went to school and at many Catholic churches my faith was strengthened by having to fight against heresy and open dissent against the Catholic Church by priests, teachers, religious and laity. When I was growing up, we were the only family who continued to practice our faith as Sunday Mass-going Catholics as others fell away when their children my age reached high school. As a young adult, my faith was encouraged in my faith when I moved to the city and met other young Catholics who lived their faith in a radical way. Furthermore, studying the faith and making spiritual retreats with orthodox guides helped me to continue forming myself and makes me want to continue the journey. I desire to come closer to Jesus every day of my life and hope that I can live this desire as well as I can.

Yes, two stories. I have been a priest for almost 20 years, being ordained at 38 years of age, though already living celibacy since I was 23 years old. My universal experience is that by being a celibate priest, I'm "everyone's man." I can be approached by anyone—married women, teenage men, older men—because I am free of those connections with other persons (wife, kids, relatives, etc.) that would compromise my availability and "objectivity". I hear a lot of confessions, including of married men and women, and to my amazement they are willing to share difficulties and challenges about themselves that are so personal that they would tell no one else, not even their own spouse—in the hope of receiving our Lord's redeeming grace, and perhaps some light to carry on from what advice I give them. That "independence" of the priest cannot be substituted for anything. Coming from the USA in [-], I have had a chance to talk and spend time with seminarians from different parts of Australia—Sydney, Melbourne, Perth. All of them frankly admit that they find this aspect of priestly life challenging, and many of them continue to have some degree of friendship with women. Being the sons of their times, like all of us, they are affected by the sensuality and permissiveness of our culture, and they often have to battle sinful habits that work against priestly celibacy. But I don't recall a single seminarian who thought that priestly celibacy was a bad idea. In fact, they are greatly attracted by that ideal and it is a factor that often motivates them during their more difficult moments. Our seminaries are experiencing a kind of "boom" that hasn't been seen in decades, which is another proof that priestly celibacy has an intrinsic value, and the witness of a celibate life is needed even for our society today.

Personally, I have been lucky to have been brought up by a Catholic family with parents who both love their faith. Although, my family was far from perfect there were many values that helped to build my formation in the faith. I think when it came to the crunch of choosing to make the faith my own, the help of having spiritual direction from a priest readily available, as well as having access to receive formation from Opus Dei to be able to learn how to pray and persevere in prayer was what helped me the most. My personality too was one that wasn't strong when it came to leadership, which meant that following the crowd was in my mind crucial for me to fit in. Had it not been for the good school I went to ([-]) where most families received the formation from Opus Dei meant that the type of peer pressure was not a major issue as I had heard from my friends from other schools. Other things such as witnessing the devotion of good Catholic priests who had come from overseas in the parish, experiencing firsthand the love for the faith of other young people my age when doing an overseas pilgrimage and conference. This experience helped me to strengthen my conviction in faith seeing that the Church is universal and how good and beautiful it is when the youth are immersed in the faith and not worldly things. This experience of a culture of faith was definitely an eye-opener and memory that will stay with me forever.

Most of the love I have for my faith was instilled at a young age through my parents with their ordinary but fervent love for God and His Church. I came to grow in my faith at the time of World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney. I started receiving formation at a centre of Opus Dei as a preparation

for being a volunteer for the event and it was there that I learned to value the sacraments and the personal relationship with Christ. Through this I discovered my vocation. Without this experience of WYD I wouldn't have seen how there are others who live their faith seriously. Now I also volunteer with high school girls with the desire for them to form themselves in virtue and love for their faith.

The example and preaching of our holy priests have been inspiring and helped me to foster a love of God. Unity of the parishioners with the priest and bishop have resulted vocations in our parish. I am grateful for the spiritual nourishment I have received from the Catholic Church in Australia.

Life is always challenging and deals out its cards no matter what. I have had to deal with mental illness of my spouse leading to a marriage breakdown and raising 5 children on my own for many years. My faith in Divine Providence has sustained me greatly all this time. Without my faith and the support of my Catholic friends I could not have managed this.

My religion teacher had a big impact on my life. She was a Good Samaritan Nun, coming in to our Public School, week after week, wearing her habit with pride, made me realize faith was something to be proud of and not ashamed of my beliefs, to always stand up for what is good and true. There have been a lot of people who I have met along the way who have strayed and gone away from the faith, however these experiences have never moved me to the point as to alter my faith to suit the situation it is not the faith that needed to change but the person and their way of life. "Hating the Sin and not the sinner". I believe Faith should be a pillar of strength where they can find refuge, correcting their way of life without compromising the faith. I can understand why we need this question put before us as too many people have lost their way when it comes to the practice of our Faith, the problem has been that, faith has not been taught to us as a way of life, but taught as a history lesson, learning about Jesus and his way of life but somehow missed out on loving Jesus enough to applying his way of life, to our way of life. We will still have the problems that face us, even if we change our ways, to suit the people in Australia, we will not be teaching our future generation how to live the faith with its rules and regulation to be resilient to the changing times, we will only be altering it to suit the climate and not as a saving grace in order to reach Heaven. Why do people when they no longer believe in the faith insist upon remaining in and influencing the Church? In the Catholic Church there are many truths which one must accept to deny these is to relinquish the right to the name "Catholic".

I have loved the support of [-]'s [-], which has been notorious for banal liturgy and music, under Fr [-] of a new music group of which I was a member which promoted traditional liturgy and music. I have loved the support of my notion of an Easter carol service (which I started at [-] College as a student in [-], believing Easter deserves the place in culture Christmas enjoys) by [-] Cathedral from 2012 to 2018 inclusive and by [-]'s Broadway since 2018.

I discovered Opus Dei early in my married life. In a nutshell, I have learnt best—how to love. The guidance over the years and formation I have received, helped me to see my purpose as a Catholic wife, mother and friend. My children have attended the schools and received formation constantly throughout their lives. Their ages range from 25-15 (7 children). I know it is thanks to this formation that they practice their Faith, and understand the importance of apostolate/evangelisation. The spirit of The Work always imbued us with the idea that we, "as Catholics do everything with joy and peace; that we propose, we don't impose". The formation that has been offered for men, women and youth is consistent, faith-filled and FUN. Opus Dei has always encouraged us to support our parish life and, in particular, the parish priests. (I have explained to the different PPs over the years that due to the inconsistency of parish youth programs and initiatives, I chose to continue with the formation through Opus Dei.) They understood this explanation.

I mention a pleasant ecumenical in my local area. We share an annual Taize service. A joint local Christmas carol evening. And a local dinner at the golf club. I also regret that in [-]'s time in [-], his attitude prevented an ecumenical celebration of the wedding of our younger daughter in our Uniting Church with her now husband who is an enthusiastic Catholic. We were first offered a

priest, eventually a blessing of the ring outside the ceremony. Our now son-in-law turned that down. Two kids later, we all move around between our Churches when we feel like it!
I am a cradle Catholic. My parents are both devout and they raised 9 children. I do not have any conversion story, nor any moment when I saw the light, nor any passage through the valley of death. You could say that my faith journey has been very ordinary, run-of-the-mill, even boring. But I don't see it that way. I am immensely thankful to my parents for bringing me up in the faith, for their total lack of ambiguity when it came to matters of faith, and for their total indifference to the fact that in much of this they had to go directly against the current. I think the Church in Australia is called to do the same.
[-] is an 83 yr old Catholic woman, a British immigrant to Australia in the 1960s. She is a wise, spiritual and active elder of her Catholic Church community over many long years. She has been involved in a variety of Church work, including Catechist teaching, the Catholic Women's League, the Church Piety Stall, and Social Justice Group. [-] is an educated person with experience as a professional primary school teacher of more than 40 years. She is now a widow, following a long and fulfilled marriage, and is a mother of a large family she and her Irish Catholic husband (also an immigrant to Australia) raised together in the Catholic faith. She possesses a wealth of practical knowledge and spiritual wisdom which all her life roles build. It has been my great privilege to get to know [-] through her current work in social justice and in my role typing up her submission.
Truth sets us free. I searched for years, doing Protestant Bible study etc. I never left the Church, as I was well formed in the fact that the Catholic Church was founded by Christ on the Apostles. But I was hungry. I began to attend Recollections and found the food I was looking for with priests of Opus Dei in 1986. As a result I have grown in my love for Christ and His Church. I got the answers I was looking for. The teachings of the Church were explained clearly. My personal relationship with Jesus and His mother grew. My prayer life also grew.
I am married to a wonderful man who was an ordained priest. He could have made a fabulous contribution as a married priest. A celibate life, for him, was far too big a sacrifice. In the priesthood he saw priests who carried out affairs with women in secret and priests who had homosexual relationships. None of these were isolated cases and highlighted the fact that celibate priesthood just does not work. The priests who did not have affairs were heavy drinkers or, sadly, looked towards children. We have seen it all and it is now time it all stopped. I have raised my children in the faith. They are now all in their thirties and have no interest in pursuing their faith. The modern person will not tolerate a patriarchal religion that does not include women in equal measure and that has archaic rules. At Mass every Sunday I look around at the dwindling numbers and the multiple grey heads and wonder where we will be in ten years. I will go to Mass this morning and most people in the Church will be older than me. They are attending out of a sense of obligation. Young people won't buy that. They need a better reason than the threat of hell. This week it has been particularly difficult to be a Catholic. Anti-Catholic feeling is running high and we are suffering the fallout from the failings of our priests. For goodness sake it is time to wake up and make positive changes.
My encounter with [-] Study Centre in [-] when I was a university student searching for the meaning in my Catholic faith changed my life and started me on a rich journey where I have fallen more and more in love with the Faith with each passing year. The formation and opportunities I received to deepen my faith were outstanding and have continued in my role as a teacher today. The work that the prelature of Opus Dei does for the building of the Catholic faith in a positive and deep way is remarkable and something to be widely supported and encouraged.
My experience in the faith has been a positive one—but I consider myself very fortunate in this regard. I had loving parents and wider family that had a strong faith and passed in on to me. They were interested in helping to teach my about God, they came to my sacraments, they were interested. My great uncle gave me rosary beads and told me about Mary—from him I learned about Fatima. I learned to read widely about my faith. I was educated by St Josephs' nuns in the country and later by Dominican nuns in Sydney—they all encouraged my faith, they treated us

kindly and so did the lay teachers. The priests, Monsignors and bishops I encountered were all good men and also encouraged me in faith and for that I thank them very much. I did not experience any abuse and for that I am grateful but I know boys that were not so fortunate at one of the boys' schools in the country town where I lived (boys that would have first gone to my primary school). My heart goes out to them and their families. It would have been such a breach of trust and so reprehensible—against everything that Jesus taught us. I am saddened by what has occurred, quite angered at the way that it has been handled by so many and shocked at the lack of penance particularly by the hierarchy of the Church in this regard. This is why I suggest a worldwide compensation fund—something that would say to victims—"we understand", "we are sorry", "we will now undergo hardship of our own in the Church to prove how sorry we are" and that "it will never occur again". Words are just "words". We need to actually "do something". I have many relatives in Northern Ireland that I was fortunate to visit in 1999—at that time they were shocked and dismayed by the abuse scandals going on there—many had devoted much of their lives to God (including one sister that had been a nun). I remember the sadness in their eyes, an inability to really discuss what had occurred. This has been repeated in so many countries—it is just so unforgivable and I really think that the Plenary Council needs to take these concerns to Rome but actually achieve something concrete by way of "penance" for the Church. I pray that the Australian Church will support Pope Francis wholeheartedly and prayerfully in all the reforms he wants to make. I pray for him most days and I teach my children in class to do the same (although not of course the reason why as we cannot mention such things to them). I pray the Plenary Council will actually "do" something and not just be a talking festival so that people can vent and then simply forget about it. The mission Jesus gave us by our baptism is far too important for this ... Thank you.

My sons attended a Jesuit school in Sydney ([-]) and their leadership by Fr [-] was truly inspiring.

There are three experiences that stand out the most for me in terms of shaping my faith in Australia. The first is being part of a youth group called "Antioch". This group was a place where I felt welcomed and supported as I navigated through the difficult teen years and early adulthood. The group was a place where I learned story telling was the best form of witnessing the Good News and moreover I learned the best way to live the Good News was to walk with another person in their joys and pains. I was also able to embrace my faith even though I was surrounded by people who could be cynical or dismissive of it. The second experience was studying theology up to postgraduate level. This extended experience shaped my faith because it helped me name my experiences. When experiences are named, healing can often take place. Moreover, studying theology helped me to discern the "signs of the times", to be open-minded and have a reasoning faith. I've also helped others who have struggled with certain aspects of the faith such as difficult Bible passages or sayings by popes. The third experience was being pushed out of my role working in the [diocesan] office. I watched with utter devastation as I was put through cold, calculated and depersonalized legal processes. In other words, I was not allowed to meet in person with any people in leadership to have a conversation with them and address misunderstanding. They reason that they gave me that chance initially but the chance was given in their own terms without any care for any distress that I was experiencing as an abuse survivor. They reason that the way they treat me pastorally is separate from the way they treat me as an employee but they do not see that a Church that preaches openness and dialogue on the one hand and then practices the opposite on the other hand creates confusion and hurt especially for abuse survivors trying to figure out who can be trusted and who cannot. In the eyes of civil law, the diocese appears to have followed civil rules but just because they have the right to do something legally, it doesn't mean they have acted humanely. The Church of all places should be modelling humane practices within the bounds of law, defaulting towards restorative justice/reconciliation between two parties given that in any human situation, misunderstanding will certainly occur. It is as if the Church in this case has swung from one side of the pendulum (where it once ignored civil legal processes because things can be 'quietly forgiven') to the other side (where civil legal processes

are followed to the letter, removing human interaction because there is fear of emotions being involved). I know that I am not the only person who has experienced such violence. Experiencing this extreme rejection from official representatives of the Church and seeing this similarly happen to people I care about has very much rocked my faith in the institution. I have been depleted by this form of re-victimization.
My faith is deeply rooted in COMMUNITY. The Church is about the strong, grass-roots communities that make up the Church. COMMUNITY is our greatest asset. It must be protected and nurtured.
I some months ago attended a MENALIVE NATIONAL conference at Stanwell Tops and keep in touch with a group of men where we share our reflections on the gospel daily via WhatsApp. It might be beneficial for the parish to hold a weekend or have a speaker attend to set alight the hearts of men in our parish (who whether they know it or not) need the camaraderie and love that comes out of such a forum.
I have been shaped by my family and by the nuns with whom I work today in the areas of homelessness, drug addiction etc. that is where I find the real Church.
I attended school in the early 60s to early 70s. By 1973, as it was clear to me, the deformative effects of those preaching the "spirit of the council" had invaded religious education in Catholic schools. The strict use of catechesis gave way to the discussion of "feelings and experiences". The decline in Catholic religious education in Catholic schools stems from that period. I was fortunate to be part of a family where the faith was held in high esteem, and continue in regular Mass attendance and attendance at the sacraments. My spouse and all four children are in full communion. My son is now in formation for the diocesan priesthood in Sydney. It is edifying to see now, in many parishes, the number of people at Sunday Mass, and at regular daily Mass attendance. There appears to be a resurgence of the living of the faith among those who regularly attend Church.
The following are the ways the Church in Australia has shaped my life: From about the age of 10 the Church came into my life, (a) was enrolled into a Catholic School and received the sacraments (the class had received them years before). I became an Altar Boy. (b) When I left school I joined the Catholic Youth Organization so was involved with Catholic Youth. (c) When I got married we were in a new parish and were invited to come to Mass. I am still a parishioner of this parish and my children went to Catholic Schools where I was involved in their activities. (d) Later in life I joined the Catenian Association (a Catholic men's organization) and the St. Vincent de Paul Society. More than half my friends are Catholic. (e) When I die I would like to have a Requiem Mass and be buried in a Catholic Cemetery.
I was not brought up a Catholic but after my marriage 50yrs ago to my husband, I became a Catholic. My husband's example and love of his faith helped me look into the Catholic Faith. Apart from the Grace of God, two factors particularly contributed to me being convinced of the truth of the Catholic Faith. I studied what was then called Apologetics, giving me answers to any questions I asked. The second factor was taking the plunge to try to live my marriage according to the Church's teachings on marriage and openness to children. As we accepted the children God sent us (and were blessed with 11), I came to more deeply love and appreciate the truth and beauty of those teachings. I understand that couples cannot always be in a position to have a large family, which we fortunately were, but I wish more men and women would better understand that following natural law (and NFP if needed) with regard to sexuality, comes with deep joy and gratitude. I fear too many couples are not taught and supported by the Church and resort to secular morals of premarital sex, contraception and abortion. This is an area the Church needs to address.
I migrated in 1988. I faced discrimination on age, nationality and education in my career. I brought up my 9-year-old son as a sole parent. But my faith in God led me and my son to success despite all adversity.

Two or three years ago a man I know asked me if I believed in God. My answer was "Yes, of course I do ". It occurred to me later that my answer closed off any possibility of discussion. Had I said "On the balance of probability, I do think God is real", there would have been scope for further discussion.
How to deepen personal faith / spiritual life of the faithful? Based on own experience, there is confusion and ignorance of Teachings of Jesus. -provide and encourage different forms of prayer—chaplets, prayers for the sick, adoration -public prayer and private prayer -encourage people to daily Masses and love of Eucharist -priestly example to support and encourage all forms of prayers, pious practices and worship that is authentically Catholic and Traditions of our faith.
I am a migrant who has lived in Australia for 30 years. My strong faith foundation comes from my upbringing in Malaysia. I thank God that I had that strong foundation which I still hold on to. When I think of my children who grow up here, I am disappointed that they do not have the support from my parish to help them grow and develop. Trying to start a children's program in my parish was a huge battle and challenge. Even though we have the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at [-], it is still a struggle today to build our community. Sometimes I feel like we are like Elijah who was rejected by his own people.
I grew up in a "traditional" Catholic household—Sunday Mass, Rosary every night, Grace before and after meals, altar boy, Catholic schools and then Seminary from 1964 to 1969. These events did shape me to my present position in the Church—Mass each week (Proclaimer and Eucharistic Minister), St Vincent de Paul Society, Communion to the Sick. I love my Church and feel part of a Community. However, I am "tribal" and attend Saturday evening Mass at the same Church sitting with the same people each week. However, I do not feel that it is a Church of equals.
I have been reading the daily scriptures for 40 years, reflecting and sharing them with others for 20 years and can witness how this has transformed for life.
I am a practicing Catholic, a convert, I am an Acolyte, a member of our parish council and a Catechist helper.
My children attend a school in Sydney where the spiritual formation is entrusted to Opus Dei (As a former Religious Education teacher myself, I know how R.E is taught in our Catholic schools). I have been so impressed with the formation provided to parents and I have loved seeing the faith life of my children progress under their excellent teachers and Chaplains. I would highly recommend diocesan schools study this model of education.
Growing up I had a fantastic parish priest. He was strong in the teachings and was a fantastic example of how to be a loving Father. Once he passed I find it very hard to find a parish priest as holy and good as him.
Many Catholics are tired of talking about the Church's weaknesses.
I am a Y12 student from [-] School for Girls. I grew up in many countries prior to Australia. My first impression in the Church in Australia was that everyone who went to Church was elderly; in Churches in other countries there were many kids in my age, but here, hardly any. I was surprised at the lack of effort and enthusiasm in the involvement of children in the Church. However, I realised that this was not true for all when I moved schools to [-] School for Girls. [-] is a school run by the organisation Opus Dei. This school took me by a complete surprise—there were so many practicing girls, girls my age who went to weekly Mass and confession! They each had amazing, loving relationships with their families and I am extremely fortunate to spend my high school years with them. They had been such amazing inspirations towards me; I learned so much from them and I finally understand that even the youth, we, are called to be saints from now. Currently, my friends and I go to means of formation (retreats, circle, meditation, talks, chats) every week as a group, and I cannot ask for more. [-] and [-] (Opus Dei Centre for women) has taught me everything about faith and continues to educate me on it, and I cannot express my gratitude enough for it. I was lucky—but I know many other Catholic teens are not; it is extremely hard for them to get into the faith due to the common perception: "Catholics are boring, judgemental, uncool and conservative". They also don't have the means to increase their faith

except through youth group, at most. The Youth Group in my parish are active members in the Church, yet they seem to lack respect for our Lord (they wear thongs, short shorts and low cut tops to Mass and they dab during the hymns), moreover seem to value the idea of being 'Holy' together, not developing their personal relationships with God. It is also sad to hear and see 'Catholic' schools, that don't teach nor practice the faith. I personally know a catechist that taught elective Catholic religion (parents can choose if they would like to enrol a kid in that class) in a public school and was fired by the school by a heated complaint of two parents: "she made them go into 2 lines; girls and boys before letting them go in the classroom" and "she said IVF was a sin and if you do it you will go to hell". The catechist recalls vividly that she did not say that—when one child asked her that, she had answered that it was unjust to do so, but also added carefully that she would discuss further in another class. In this way, even catechists are muted and being forbidden to voice out the true teachings of the Church (e.g. regarding to Same Sex Marriage, abortion, euthanasia, IVF, etc.)

I grew up in a practising Catholic Family. Our family events are very much centred on Catholic customs and traditions observing Saints feast days, big celebration of Christmas and Easter is the highlight of our year. My parents' faith was more of fear of God, that we observe these customs so win God's favour. When my husband and I migrated here to Australia, we found the real faith which is centred in God's love. Through lots of formation in Opus Dei, we have learned to appreciate the faith, deepen our hope and certainly learned to love God and others. God became very much a part of my day, receiving sacraments more often which is the source of Grace. Through these formation, I can see how beautiful and profound Christ's teachings. Life is not a bed of roses but it seems to be because you have the security and love of the most powerful being in the universe.

My faith education despite being educated in Catholic schools from Kindergarten to Yr 12 was abysmal. I have had to seek formation in my adult years and thankfully found solid teaching through Opus Dei, Marian Movement of priests' prayer groups, Parousia Media, National Association of Catholic Families, Sisterhood, Dominican Sisters, attending talks and reading many fine Catholic books—most from the USA. We could not trust the Diocesan Schools to educate our children in the faith, so send them to independent Catholic schools at great personal cost. The leadership of Cardinal [-] and Archbishop [-] have brought tremendous fruit to our lives.

Recently a new parish priest arrived at our parish. Within a few weeks he decided to change Mass times without consultation with the broader community. The congregation of one Mass centre requested a change which impacted upon another Mass centre. He decided and informed the parish it was for the best.

I have been a Catholic all my life and I love my faith. I have been fortunate enough to get to know my faith through my parents, the Bible, reading the catechism and other books, attending retreats and seeing holy examples like St John Paul II, St Mother Theresa and read about other Saints. I also got to know many priests outside my parish who helped me on my way and I have EWTN at home. Many people are not that fortunate, they never got to know the faith and I don't blame them. You can't love what you don't know. I am thankful to God, for the grace of faith, that he helped me on my way. I can't nail it to one particular experience but definitely attending WYD's helped me on my way. Though I was alone in my parish, it strengthened my faith to see millions of other young people sharing my faith at WYDs.

I am the only one of four children who still is an active Catholic. Only one other still identifies as Catholic. My faith is important to me as a place for reflection, to retain hope and a place of peace. Many people have lost their belief in the teachings of the Church because they lack relevance to their day to day experience. Being Catholic is seen as a place where you must obey rules and are burdened with guilt rather than a place for joy and peace. We are always doing something wrong (not going to reconciliation, not attending Church often enough, not giving enough money). We need to celebrate the positives and make the Church a place where people go to feel welcomed and connected.

It was my experience in Antioch that cemented my faith and has directed my life and involvement in the Church. Since I was 16, I have actively contributed to my parish and Diocese. I am saddened by the fact that my own children haven't had the same opportunity to develop their faith despite their willing involvement in our local parish activities.
I was raised a Catholic where My God was a God to be feared—a very negative and non-loving God. It was an encounter with a more progressive priest about 10 years ago who exposed me to my loving God and I have not looked back.
We all have a story but this is not the "dream time". God works in everyone in incredible mysterious ways and I am no exception. My journey here is not complete so a "story" would be also incomplete. Move on from the novelties—be holy and the Church will flourish. I have noticed in all my travels both in Australia and throughout the world that "young people" are flocking to the Traditional Church—not the modern Church—It speaks volumes to me.
My children (both brought up as Catholics and attended Catholic schools) no longer believe in God. Their prayers for miracles for others were not answered so they became "non-believers." In contrast, I believe God has given me many miracles especially with regard to my health—recovering from major illnesses in my 30's, 40's and 50's.
My faith was probably influenced by my mother, more than by my Catholic Education. She always was very caring and gave her time to help others. Priests in various parishes were often inspiring but sadly not all of them. Many nuns in my secondary education did a lot to encourage us in our Catholic life.
I share my participation in the Charismatic Renewal and the seeking of Adult Education around theology and prayer together with communion with other like-minded Christians as saving me from despair.
Many years ago after struggling to meet anyone who lived their faith seriously I gave God an ultimatum. Find me a Catholic friend who can show me how to follow Christ or I'm out. I was sure Jesus didn't go through his passion and die on a cross so that I could roll up every Sunday, listen to a dull sermon and then live a bourgeois existence for the rest of the week. Within a couple of weeks I met someone who became my friend and brought me along to different classes and retreats and talks. I was like a sponge and am so grateful. I knew relatively nothing about my faith, prayer or grace. I hadn't gone to a Catholic school but Jesus was seeking me out. The priest who gave the first talk was an Opus Dei priest just speaking to uni students. I was like Paul with the scales falling from my eyes. That's why I am such a strong advocate for teaching good doctrine and the need for a real prayer life at the same time. Both are needed to live a joyful Catholic life. It would be great if more people could experience practical sermons talks or whatever to learn how to put their faith into everyday practice.
If I had never discovered the Traditional Latin Mass, I would have fallen away from the faith, because my teachers and peers, priests and fellow parishioners, did everything they could to extinguish the light of faith.
<p>-Examples of ordinary friends who were convinced about their faith and practicing it in day-to-day life has inspired me to seek true doctrine and live out my faith through relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. It has been tremendously helpful to have friends and spiritual directors with deep understanding of the faith to ask questions.</p> <p>-Reception of regular sacraments (weekly confession and daily Mass) has been my primary source of grace and strength to grow in my personal spiritual life as well as source of strength for apostolate in day-to-day life among family, friends and colleagues by meeting them where they are at while presenting the orthodox truth when the Holy Spirit calls which attracts. At times speaking out for the truth has required courage and ongoing doctrinal formation and spiritual direction from priests and other lay Catholic faithful well formed in the Catechism and living out the faith has really helped me.</p>
Unfortunately I've had a bad experience since coming to Australia and having kids. I put my kids in the Catholic schools system so that they could learn about certain values and faith. However I've

had two children go through the sacramental program and have been shocked at how depersonalised the celebrations are in the [-], Diocese of [-]. It's left such a sour taste in my mouth that I am considering not allowing my second child to make his next one. I think the debate of the same sex marriage vote was a disgrace. Being encouraged by the Church to exclude another fellow man goes against everything me and my faith are. God created us, imperfections and all. God loves us, imperfections and all. Jesus was an example of someone to would defend everyone, and yet for some reason this has been lost. This was an opportunity for the Church to rise up and embrace us all yet it chose a path of exclusion and superiority, neither of which should be tolerated by any one, regardless of their religion.

I am genuinely surprised, delighted and amazed when speaking to a variety of Catholics from different backgrounds how much their faith and their Church means to them. How keen they are to shape a particular Australian Church for the 21st century. This gives me great hope—especially now in these dark times of sexual abuse revelations.

Personally I am still seeking to identify a "transformational encounter with Jesus that leads me to accept and follow Him" (a heart response into relationship rather than head information and "expected behaviour".

My story is that some of the best people in the Church structure are nuns—take the nuns at Jamberoo Abbey—I have had a deeply spiritual experience in that beautiful and Christ centred space. The nuns of our Church would make great leaders of the plenary council if the bishops cannot consent to a lay person leading.

I received the sacrament of baptism back in 1961. According to the Old Rite, exorcised and blessed salt is placed on the baby's tongue thereby consecrating it to prepare the child for First Communion. The liturgical significance is the Eucharist is sacred and must only be touched by an ordained priest whose hands have been consecrated. This ritual of significance was experienced by me. Alas, I did not know this until February 2019. In the new rite of baptism, the baby's tongue is not consecrated with blessed salt and we are all encouraged since, I think, the 1980s to receive the Eucharist in the hand. I feel liturgically abused by this. What is more important is what Jesus thinks of all of us touching him and not treating him as Christ the King. Speaking of Christ our King, on 7th October of 2018, I read the following tweet exchange between a gentleman named [D] and Archbishop [-] (file attached): [D]: "Most people want Jesus as a consultant rather than a King" Abp [-]: "Not too sure I want (or have) him as either." Pope Pius XI in 1928 stated that Christ is King in his Encyclical creating the Feast of Christ the King that no doubt Archbishop [-] has celebrated during his priesthood. Frankly, I am horrified by this but it does answer many questions for the laxity of Liturgy and understanding of the Faith in our Australian Church. Given that the Archbishop holds a very senior position in the 2020 project, what chance do I have in my submission being considered? But I have not primarily written this submission for the more progressive within our Church. That is a secondary exercise. I have written it for you, the reader to consider. Keep the Faith and be a saint!

Jesus and weekday Mass at 6.45 am as a child helped me get through a traumatic childhood. I know a few people have had horrific experiences within the Church. For me, my faith is what has saved me and I'm currently writing a book of my experiences for my children and descendants. The younger generation needs to know how they are loved so much by their Creator.

I have been happy to be Catholic throughout my life. I have always tried to challenge myself, religiously, and I hold on. But I hold on for the wonderful community of [-][-] to which I belong and feel a genuine part of. I couldn't practise my faith on a weekly basis anywhere else. I just don't feel comfortable elsewhere. I do not push my children to remain with the Faith. I just hope that, through my and my husband's example, they will return.

Having regular classes and doctrinal formation from a young age has helped me to love and understand my faith better. I am astounded to have met friends at university who went to Catholic high schools and didn't know basic things about their own faith. That there were Three persons in One God. What the rosary was. One of my friends told me that in her school, her

religion teacher was a proud atheist. How can some teach the faith when they don't even believe it? Another thing that has helped me and helped me connect better with the teachings of Jesus is my youth group organise and plan many community service projects and activities, within Sydney, in regional NSW (with Indigenous children) and overseas. (I have gone to Tonga and Kenya). These projects have taught me to go beyond myself, to be less selfish, to be demanded of myself spiritually/physically, to seek those who are needy. And these are practical and physical manifestations of Christ's teachings to go out and tell the Good News.

I came to Australia as a child in the early 90s. My parents enrolled us into the local primary Catholic school. I still remember with great fondness the hymns that we had to learn for school Masses. I also have fond memories of the first sacrament I received in Australia—Confirmation. Being immigrants to this country, the Church provided us with great opportunities to meet people and feel a sense of belonging. As we did not know any people when we first arrived here in Sydney, I think Sunday Mass would have been the only social interaction that our family had at the time. Coming from a cultural background where respect for our parents was strongly upheld, We had no choice as teenagers but to go to Mass every week! We also have to pray the Rosary every night as a family. Looking back I'm very grateful for this as my siblings and I have remained strong enough in our faith into adulthood. My husband and I met when we were in our first year of university at a Catholic community youth group (not one set up through a parish). My husband had learnt a lot about our Catholic faith through his association with Opus Dei and it was through my husband that I started to learn more about my faith and to deepen my understanding of the Church's teachings. I feel that had I not met (and married!) my husband—I would still be Catholic but only in name and without a true understanding of the Church's teachings. This understanding has helped me to avoid the temptation of some sins, has given me a deeper sense of awareness, has kept me in constant conversation with God and it has enriched my life in many ways. I have also had the great privilege of attending talks by members of Opus Dei which have had a significant impact on my life, my happiness and the way we raise our children. I feel that these talks on formation and the Catholic faith are paramount to how we live our married life, our parenting and our own character development. They provide knowledge, humour, support and encouragement. They provide me with ambition for my soul. I hope that one day the Church is able to offer this so all parishioners and Catholics in Australia can enjoy what I enjoy.

I would like to say that Opus Dei has helped me come to greater knowledge of my faith and closeness to God.

My experience of the Church has been largely positive. I have seen the good work done by Catholic parishes and charitable organisations. I have met many good priests and nuns and very faithful Catholic lay people. I am increasingly convinced that it is our actions, rather than proselytising, that bears most effective witness to our faith.

I have been very fortunate to have been born in a Catholic family. Both parents practised the faith and could not have been more loving parents. They passed on the faith through their personal example. We went to Mass and prayed the Rosary as a family. Both my parents lived lives of great service to others. My Father was an active member of the St Vincent de Paul Society and my mother, as the children grew up, worked with Pregnancy Help and Lifeline. They taught us to be helpful and kind to relatives and neighbours and to our Indigenous Australians. They lived their faith thoroughly: in words and deeds. I had a good grounding in my faith my primary school years. In High School, it was more hit and miss. I am very grateful to the good nuns who taught me and who gave their lives to give us an education. When I was finishing my university studies I received invaluable input for my faith from some wonderful priests and lay people who were members of Opus Dei. I owe them a great deal.

I believe it is often in great suffering that true growth in many areas occurs. In 2015 my 14 year old son was diagnosed with leukaemia literally overnight. He faced two years of intensive treatment and uncertainty of outcomes. About 6 months into his journey I wrote the following: 'I am more than who I think I am and if I unite with others in love we can start to heal the

brokenness of this world. The diversity of the oncology ward kitchen is a humbling and enriching experience as we are all stripped back to our fragile selves and meet each other without our masks but with true empathy and compassion as we walk beside our children to heal their bodies and along the way our broken spirits are healed. What a world we could create to have the profound humbleness and open-heartedness of a journey such as this where it doesn't matter what race, colour or language we speak nor what we believe as we are all treated with respect and care, supported in our grief and in our joys ... My prayer is that somehow we each may take our experience out into our communities and families and be the face of Jesus with all we are privileged to encounter in our lives.' My son continues in remission and I am grateful every day for the graces we have received. The prayers and love that surrounded us carried us through as did the love of God and Mary.

The simplest events can be most effective. A smile at the right time, or a listening ear, or timely advice to a friend are both easy and effective ways of brightening others' lives. Is it time to resurrect the 'good deed a day' ethic of the Boy Scouts? Some today call it 'mindfulness' it used to be called common sense! Maybe we could even go a step further and label it 'normal Catholic behaviour'.

1. A daughter was diagnosed with MS when she was 10. Because MS is very rare in children the drugs are not suitable and she experienced very bad reactions to the drugs and for several years could not take these drugs. By the time she was 15 she was constantly in Hospital. At this stage she was partially paralysed in the face and mouth, she had constant pain across most of her body and could hardly move. She had recurring episodes of Optic Neuritis. Her mother's cousin paid for her and her father and mother to go with the cousin and his family to Lourdes on a pilgrimage. 2 weeks before the pilgrimage she was rushed to hospital when the symptoms dangerously flaring up. At that time the hospital carried out an MRI of the brain and other tests revealing severe lesions on the brain. Despite this she managed to make the flight and arrived in Lourdes France. The whole group constantly prayed to Our Lady of Lourdes. The next morning the group went to morning Mass and after Mass the daughter, her father and the cousin went with her to the outside taps from the spring. The daughter took a mouthful of water and turned to the father and the cousin and said "Something has happened I could feel the cold". Looking at her all the white mucus covering her tongue had disappeared. Later it was realised that all the debilitating pain had gone and she was able to walk, kneel and move with no pain. She was taken to the Clinic at Lourdes and the event was reported. She was advised that a lot of the miracles at Lourdes in recent years have been in regard to MS, because it cannot be cured. On returning to Sydney she was immediately taken back to the hospital and another MRI was carried out. She was told that all the lesions that were on the brain the week before she left were now gone. Her Neurologist (and atheist) stated that he could not explain it. The daughter attributes it to the intervention of Our Lady. She is now 22, her faith remains very strong.

2. A daughter, despite a strong Catholic upbringing where the Rosary was said as a family every night, had formed a relationship with a Muslim and had started to share a flat with him. She was treated very badly including physical violence to her and his preventing her from seeing any of her friends and obstacles to her seeing her family. Her father convinced her that it would be a good thing to have a cup of coffee every Sunday morning with him. This then developed into the suggestion of saying the Rosary a few times each week. She said she had very good memories of the family rosary. The father asked her to put her life in the hands of Our Lady each time she said the rosary. Some 6 months after she started saying the rosary she made a break from the male friend and moved back home. That was 18 months ago and her faith is now being lived. She now is active in the Youth Ministry of the local Catholic Church and has given talks on the Rosary telling the youth how she meditates each mystery.

My story is probably fairly common. I was baptised into the Catholic Church as a baby, brought up going to Mass on Sunday and went through Catholic school K-12. My experience with the Church ebbed and flowed. I was a member of Antioch during late high school and helped my parents run

a diocesan camp each year. During undergraduate studies I stopped attending Mass, but still kept my Catholic identity and approach to life. It was this time away from the institutional Church though, living in the world on the outskirts of the Church that actually started me thinking about my faith. I had started questioning things (in a good way) and wanted to know more. After undergraduate studies I met my future wife at my new local parish (she was the youth minister and a Catholic high school teacher). She was studying a Master of Theology, and as I read and talked about this with her, I found that this study and critical thinking was where I began feeling God more personally. Throughout all the youth groups and things I had attended in my life, I didn't really understand the personal relationship with God/Jesus. By studying a Master of Theology myself, I had found my path to God. I still question (in a good way) my faith and faith in general, theology, the Church and the world, but in this questioning, study and consideration, I find God. I also find, however, flaws in the institutional Church, and it is discouraging to admit at times (especially in recent times) that the institutional Church is the face of Christ's Body in the world.

The role of the laity—but still a Church led by its hierarchy of bishops and priests. The laity must do more, but leadership and direction from the clergy is still fundamental. Nonetheless, lay associations have a key role to play in the Church and especially apostolate in Australian society.

After leaving my Catholic High School, I went in search of answers to questions like 'What is the meaning of life, what is God asking of me?' I went to a variety of youth groups and parishes. Some provided novelty in way of celebrating Holy Mass, some were charismatic and appealed to the emotions. Their appeal was limited and so I kept searching. I found Opus Dei and knew that was a place where I could seek sanctity in everyday life, offering up my work, participating with more frequency in the sacraments, praying and learning the Catholic faith more deeply. I will be forever grateful that God led me, through a friend to a Centre of Opus Dei. The journey has not always been easy but it has been worthwhile. I truly don't know where I would be without the formation I have received from Opus Dei.

I've had the pleasure of facilitating a number of listening session in parishes and broader communities over the past 12 months or more. I have more specifically been assisting parishes in listening sessions related to youth and young adults. It has definitely been a privileged position to hear the joy and heartache of God's people being voiced. In this process, a number of things have begun to stand out for me: -people are hurting and lethargic. Many have been trying over and over again to bring life into their communities, and keep feeling disappointment. -There is much finger point, it is always someone else's fault which only causes further divisions. -Our clergy, the designated leaders of these communities are among the most tired and lethargic. They are often ill equipped to draw their community together to in a hall to run a listening session, let alone lead change and authentically journey with their people. -People find comfort in nostalgia—the things in the past that worked, when they were young. - People are often confused and even frustrated by young people. They are angry that they are not there among the community but are unwilling to meet young people where they are or step away from their positions to allow young people in. - Disappointment in young people, or any people seems to stem from unrealistic expectations. For example, the expectation of young people who attend WYD, on their return they will become active leaders in the parish community, filling any holes the parish has. If they are not present in their parish community in 2 years' time, filling those holes, therefore WYD didn't work. They don't set realistic expectation that young people are transient therefore may not attend this parish in a few year. They do not walk with a young person and allowing them to develop their own leadership strengths, finding their place in the parish, rather than filling a hole.

- The youth group in my parish in Western Sydney was a lot of fun, was a place to make friends, hang out, play basketball, wat pizza etc. :) One thing I really appreciated was the music. That really deepened my relationship with God at the time. I was part of the choir and really enjoyed it. The music was respectful for Mass and had beautiful lyrics. Looking back, perhaps what was also needed was more clear input on our faith and learning how to pray. I would really have

appreciated that. Thanks very much for all your time and effort going through these! Praying it's fruitful!

- I was living in Italy for a few years and it was so beautiful to see priests dressed in a way that we could easily recognise them as priests. I saw many times on trains, buses and randomly in the streets how people would go up to them to ask for prayers, advice or even just to say hi. Of course there were always a few that would start a conversation just to have a dig at the Church too. But overall it was clear to everyone that they are there for the people, among the people, 24/7. Pretty beautiful.

Since arriving in Australia just over 4 years ago, we have been abundantly blessed in meeting some amazing people within the Church who have greatly inspired us, both religious and lay people. Shortly after arriving in Australia we were fortunate to attend Mass in [-] which was celebrated by Archbishop [-]. A month or two later we met Father [-] at [-]. His homily that day, which recounted how his father taught him to pray for his vocation in life from the age of 7 inspired my 7 year old son to pray a similar prayer every night from that day onwards. We have had the pleasure of going to Mass in [-] a couple of times since to meet up with Fr [-]. My 11 year old son considers that Fr [-] will be the first Australian Pope elected! Over the next few years after settling in [-] we came to experience the wonderful Spirit of Archbishop [-]. These are three men of faith that my son and I give thanks and pray for each night, and regardless of the hard times that the Church is facing, we are excited about the future of the Church in Australia when we have priests and Archbishops of this calibre who are truly inspirational to so many people. We have also had the pleasure of being in a parish served by the Carmelite priests in [-].

As a child my parents put a strong emphasis on my faith formation. We weren't sent to Catholic schools as they were worried about being taught the 'faith' by non-Catholics. As a teenager I always kept a strong belief in God, but I strayed from regular prayer or Mass and morals were questionable at best. As a young adult, we moved suburbs and stumbled across a Catholic crowd who had an incredibly strong practising community even amongst teenagers and young adults. Through this community I regained my commitment and was able to nurture and grow my previously childlike understanding of the Catholic Church. My faith and understanding is now continually formed through weekly/monthly talks by priests, religious, Opus Dei members formed in the catechism as well as people of all ages who have been through or are going through difficulties that we encounter. This community seems to do things so well—there is a strong attendance at daily Mass, confessions available every day, talks and classes available for free to anyone who comes looking. I am so blessed to have found such a community rich in their love for God. Not only this, but they have supported us through the hardest of times! My son was diagnosed with Down Syndrome recently, as well as Congenital Heart Disease and has spent the first 3 months of his life in hospital. We had 3 months' worth of meals cooked for us and brought to our door! Outpourings of prayers and messages and babysitting from people in the community we hadn't even met before. This carried us through and filled our hearts so that we can now have the strength to advocate for life through our son's story. If only the whole world experienced some version of a community like this!

When I was at university, I became friends with another student in my year. We spent time after a late Friday afternoon classes chatting over a beer. He and a common friend opened the vitality of the Faith to me. Among the ideas they imparted was the need to bring my friends closer to God. These were life lessons for me, and I still strive to bring my friends and colleagues closer to Jesus Christ.

I am ever so grateful that there are young men and women from my children's school and from my parish who have listened to God's call to become priests and Religious Brothers and Sisters. They are wonderful role models for my children and give Australia plenty of hope in the future of the Catholic Church in Australia. Through this community, my faith and understanding is formed through weekly/monthly talks by priests, religious, Opus Dei members formed in the catechism as

well as people of all ages who have been through or are going through difficulties that we encounter. After having my baby, the school community came together to cook meals for us for the first 3 weeks. Until I met my now wife and her Catholic family, I was agnostic. Through this family I learned the true meaning of 'have faith'. I joined the Catholic Church and do not ever regret a single moment. I feel that I will never be closer to God on my own- the Catholic Church supports me in my faith journey and strengthens me when I am at my lowest, most desperate level. I need the solidity of the faith to guide me on my path to God. The stories and knowledge of people who have travelled this path before me successfully give my faith enduring strength.

I'm not as ultra-conservative as some but I do love a solid, hard-hitting sermon. Attending a Latin Mass in my youth and teen years there was no shortage of these. When I moved to the big city I found that, despite the increase in Mass availability, the sermons seemed to be flimsy at best and centred more around donating to the poor and needy rather than instructing parishioners in their faith. Once such sermon occurred at the Cathedral where a priest spent the better part of 30 minutes recounting a tale of how he chose his favourite AFL team. Needless to say, I was very much anticipating how he would tie this in with the day's Gospel reading however, this never came. He simply ended with " ... and then my team won the Grand Final this year so you really need to think about your decisions before you make them." To say I was let down is an understatement. Unfortunately, stories similar to this are almost a weekly occurrence now.

I was baptised Anglican, and undertook RCIA soon after my marriage in 1992. I am happily married with four children. We go to Mass almost every week and have tried to set a good example for our children. My oldest son has now joined an Anglican Church and my oldest daughter does not attend anymore. My faith was strongest at the time of my conversion, and during the time that we had a vibrant and inspiring priest for four years. For most of the time we've had priests who have been very well meaning but have frankly driven parishioners away due to extremely dry Masses, often due to parishioners having problems understanding accents. I try to do my bit by playing music at Mass a couple of times a month, as well as doing readings. I realise that I could do a lot more, but I really feel that many opportunities have been missed. Each year a lot of new families send their children to our parish school. They want their kids to learn about the faith, but very few families go to Mass after their first experience at the Church. I know that many churches are facing the same problem—I feel that we need to work at keeping these families and building our community. By my estimation the size of our parish has declined by more than 50% over the past 10 years. With the merging of parishes some years ago we no longer have a parish priest who resides near the Church, or has a regular presence at the school which in my opinion has had a big effect on the life of the school/parish community. There are some wonderful people in the parish but I feel that without dynamic leadership we are fighting a losing battle. Sometimes I feel like shouting out in Mass to wake people up and make them engage, move forward from the back pews and put them out of their comfort zone!

As my local Deacon would say, there are many times that I have been in a 'thin' place, where I have prayed to God for others, or offered up some suffering or anxiety, or sung in a Church community with such emotion, and these have each brought me to tears, with a strong feeling of being embraced, and a real deep feeling of purpose in my life.

For the first 20 years of my participation in church activities, I was a practising non-Catholic (involved in all parish ministry groups, served on all committees, served as Deputy PPC Chair, and twice as PPC Chair, gave out communion etc.), along with my wife who is Catholic. It wasn't until the Easter Vigil 20 years ago at our Church, when it was announced that I was being received into the Catholic Church, that there was an audible gasp from parishioners, as they did not know that I had been a practising non-Catholic for the previous 20 years. This is what going to Church should be, that the rules should not preclude practising non-Catholics from participating in ALL Church activities, if they feel comfortable in their own hearts in doing so.

The Catholic Church uses inertia as a management tool. Several years ago, I took the initiative to write to the bishop of my diocese with an idea to set up a support network for youth mental

health. This was an area where the Church could play to its strengths and become a meaningful presence in the lives of more of my peers. While the bishop expressed enthusiasm, the staff he tasked with working with me on implementing this initiative were unresponsive. Regrettably, I have encountered this in every administrative dealing I have had as a proactive member of the Church. At best, this is apathy, and at worst, obstruction, but the net result is the same: it makes erstwhile eager volunteers less inclined to contribute to the life of their faith community. In observing the development of sacramental programs in our parishes, I see the opportunity to evangelise to the parents who “wait around” or “go for a coffee” while their children are receiving instruction. Surely a Robert Barron series is a low key way to pique the interest of such an important cohort to the longevity of the Church in Australia. All the instruction under the Sun aimed at children will fall flat unless their parents are engaged and supportive. Currently, sacramental programs are typically evaluated based on the number of children that receive the sacrament. Instead, we need to consider different measurements of success, such as the proportion of families still attending weekly Mass post-sacramental program. These can be assessed through a feedback process in the year following each program’s conclusion.

I went to a secondary all-boys’ school that was orthodox in its spiritual practice. Daily Mass was offered along with religion classes that explored in depth the philosophical, metaphysical and historical dynamics of the faith. There was no “liturgical dancing” or guitar Masses to appease the youth, there was chant, incense and frequent confession offered. There were no guitar Masses, youth groups, children’s liturgy or a watered down, judgement free faith that was half-heartedly offered to both Catholic and non-Catholic students alike. Under the spiritual care of Opus Dei, seen as a controversially rigid sect of the Church, it was indeed traditional in its practice but strident and unapologetic in its teaching and defence of the faith. Our religion teachers didn’t shy away from the tough topics, they told us the hard truths that Catholicism espouses, including suffering, mortal sin, salvation and hell. The watered down and sometimes downright heretical religious education I experienced at my primary school left me leaving with an almost agnostic outlook on life. It wasn’t until I went to secondary school that my whole worldview was challenged and I truly came to believe in the faith. As the motto of my school aptly says and what Christ taught his disciples: ‘veritas liberabit vos.’ The truth will set you free.

I have had the great opportunity to be involved in activities in the primary school of my children and in the parish that have helped me on my faith journey. One was a Lenten program run in the school. We had the good fortune of having one of the Josephite sisters working in the school’s pastoral care. She and the school’s SRE who was actually a practicing Catholic run this program for Mums and it was a lovely opportunity to connect with other mothers in a welcoming environment, within schools hours which made it easy for us to join it, and a good occasion to get some input. Another program which was very good and enriching was the CAFE program run by the parish. This run for a few weeks (once a week). Again I found it very enriching and a chance to meet with fellow parishioners and feel connected to the wider faith community. There are many good programs out there like Fr. [-]’s doctrinal one ... it would be so beneficial to so many parishioners to hear them. But it should be made available at a time that is convenient. I can never stress the importance of doctrine (our Lord told the disciples that they would be fishers of men ... how do we catch fish? By the head. We too need to catch people through their head—once they understand the love of God for them, everything else will follow). Another experience I’ve had which was very recent was the visit of a temporary priest in our parish at [-] [-] over the last 3 weeks (Fr. [-]). Each of his homilies was such a blessing—when he spoke during his homilies he taught the truth with clarity, conviction and with love. No matter how long he spoke for you could hear a pin drop in the Church. People were hanging onto his every word ... people are hungry for the word of God, they are hungry for truth, they want to be demanded from ... just as our Lord demanded from his close friends. He celebrated Mass with such a tangible love for our Lord in the Eucharist—holiness is felt, it is tangible. Those 3 Masses enriched my faith very much. We need witnesses of holiness not just from our priests but from the laity.

Yes, I know many Australians who have been spiritually hungry and often living in sinful circumstances. Upon finally discovering the full truth of the Catholic Faith they have each had personal conversions to living the Catholic Faith. However so often the full truths of the Catholic Faith are like a hidden treasure that can be hard to come across. Even many RCIA courses don't really explain to people all the essential teachings of the Catholic Faith and consequent sweet obligations of living as a Catholic. We hope you will work to rectify this. We hope and pray that you will help priests and laity to have their hearts set on fire with a longing to share all the truths, beauty and goodness of the Catholic Faith with so many others who are hungering and starving from the lack of Christ.

I have met many wonderful and beautiful people through the Church. Many are open-hearted and prepared to listen to others. But I've also met many people who are completely "stuck" in a rigid way of thinking, unable to hear anything different. I believe this "stuck" mentality is one of the biggest obstacles to the rebirth of our Church. I have been blessed to know a number of clergy as dear friends. They are extremely talented, devoted people who deserve the full support and care of their people. But there are many clergy who simply don't understand. It seems to me that the ones with this living connection with family and friends are often able to teach and preach with far more relevance.

Local priest at [-] [-] inferred that we should have women priests without actually saying it. He used purposefully vague language like "we could do with some more women up here". He presented this as a solution to the child sexual abuse. An absurd proposition. After Mass, I asked him if he was advocating for women priests. "I didn't say that" was his reply. I asked him if that is what he wanted. He said that it was inevitable. I again asked him if that is what he wanted. He said that we should have an open mind like Pope Francis and that not everything is. He presented this as a solution to the child sexual abuse black and white. I pointed out that this issue is black and white—we either do or do not have female priests. I also pointed out that Jesus himself was a man and only chose men to be his priests, despite many holy women around at the time. The priest said that Jesus wasn't a man, he was a person. This sort of childish, unintellectual, ambiguous and deceitful approach to guiding the flock is most alarming. Priests like this should be sanctioned for preaching against the explicit teachings of the Church.

One of my favourite experiences of the Catholic Church is getting up early and running to 6.30 am daily Mass. There was something about the freedom of beginning the day this way from seven years and it is still a favourite way to start the day when I can. Shaping my faith were a few outstanding nuns, brothers and priests and dynamic laity. What marked these influential shapers in the Church were their actions in social justice, their poetic love of life; their compassion and community focus and theological bravery and curiosity. Quite a few of these incredible shapers have been banned or excommunicated—because they have married and left the priesthood or their work in environmental responsibility or for the poor unsettled the Church. None are bitter though. People like Matthew Fox I only know through reading and though the Church has banned him I recommend his influence: "Spirituality is essential to our survival. Religion's wounds need a "fire in the belly about justice and compassion."

Through the Schoenstatt Community, and subsequently through Opus Dei, my faith, and that of my family has been strengthened in so many ways. With Schoenstatt, when my children were young, we attended regular monthly family group functions on Sundays, where parents would discuss aspects of their faith and how to live the faith within a family unit. These sessions were invaluable to my faith and I think, to all 8 members of my immediate family. Each session had a plan and was led by the Schoenstatt sisters. During these monthly meetings, activities would also be organised for the children of the families, according to their age group. Our children loved these meetings for many reasons. They learned to love Jesus, they were in beautiful, natural surroundings and loved not only the social aspect of mixing with peers, but being led and by caring religious sisters who inspired them to love their faith. The Schoenstatt community also offered other activities for the children as well as parents; such as monthly girls groups, holiday

camps; parent retreats as well as weekend family retreats where food and childcare was provided to allow the parent and children to focus on their faith. I have many happy and grateful memories of being part of the Schoenstatt Community. I would also like to mention how the Opus Dei community has contributed to the continued growth in my faith. We moved to an area that had an Opus Dei community and schools that have Chapels and priests at the disposal of the students and parents. This provides an invaluable opportunity of daily Mass and frequent confession which has strengthened my faith. The school and community have also given me ways of practicing my faith in both prayerful and active ways of helping others in need. I am ever so grateful and encouraged by the selflessness and sharing of others in the community. Having children in all age brackets, some at school, some at University and one married with children, one of which has Downs Syndrome, I am constantly amazed at how the Community supports not only my children but the entire community, not only in physical ways but in spiritual. The community, by their example, inspire me to be more like Christ, to be prayerful and selfless; to help others, that I otherwise would be oblivious of their need. My faith and understanding grew rapidly during these monthly talks by priests, religious, and Opus Dei members formed in the catechism as well as people of all ages who have been through or are going through difficulties that we encounter.

I grew up in a religious family. We are Coptic Catholic and have always had close ties with our Church. Culturally growing up, having the faith ingrained in who you are as a person was the most natural thing in the world. There was never any distinction of being Catholic. My culture and faith have always been harmoniously intertwined. It was always more fluid than what I tended to see amongst Anglo friends. We learned our faith from our parents and attended Sunday school weekly after Church, which definitely contributed to my formation. The most dramatic impact though came as I attended high school at [-] School for girls in [-] NSW and my formation under the guidance and influence of the 'Opus Dei' community. Here formation was taken to another level. Where at the age of 12 I had never heard of the catechism of the Catholic Church, I was now memorising it. I was exposed early to teachings on human dignity and instructed in the ways of building virtue. As I grew up surrounded by friends of the same faith background, the faith grew with us. Key factors contributing to this was definitely that we had abundant access to our chaplains and they were always ready to serve. Daily Mass was always on offer, allocated confession times per class, Marian pilgrimages during May, and access to our priests for group discussions to be able to dissect the faith. Apart from our priests and teachers, having friends around that were striving for sanctity drove me from a young age to do the same. Where I had once received the faith from home, I was now bringing it home and deepening the faith of family members. I was taught not only to strive for sanctity but provided the tools to do so, through the Church and its members. They equipped me with means of keeping my faith into my adult years; To sanctify daily work, to stay close to the sacraments, to pray unceasingly, especially for the Church, to keep delving into the wonders of the faith by reading and searching and learning, to evangelise the joy of relationship with Christ as his apostle. The faith in which I was formed allowed me to see purpose in my future, guiding me to know that in loving and serving Christ, I am all He has made me to be. Now, by the grace of God, I continue to try to share this faith in my own coptic Catholic Church through services such as Sunday school and youth group.

I've had a very lucky upbringing with my family and the school I went to. It has instilled lots of values in me and I thank the Church for that. I volunteer at a homeless shelter and sponsor a child and the Catholic Churches teachings have shaped me towards giving back and showing charity.

The most important factor shaping my faith has been the St Vincent de Paul Society. I joined when I was 20 years old and my engagement at a local, national and international level has opened to me a Church with a focus on evangelisation by working with the poor. I have met people both within the organisation and while working with people in need that have revolutionised my understanding of what it is to be a Christian. The courage of those that have so little continually inspires me. For example, last year we in SVPD presented to a NSW Parliament Select Committee inquiry into electricity costs. We took with us a person we had helped, a single mother of 4

children that had suffered domestic violence, and had called on Vinnies for support. She had suffered so much, yet had incredible internal fortitude despite her suffering. She was able to speak for herself and others in her situation because of the relationship she had with St Vincent de Paul volunteers and staff. She said to the Select Committee: "I did not think I could be here today representing so many, only because it touches my heart because where I was three years ago was not a nice place. I did not know where I was going to live; I did not know many things. But today I have survived a lot and I am so grateful for all the support that is out there in the community, especially St Vincent de Paul because they have been like family to me." When someone says that a Church organisation is like family to them, that says to me that the Church is really living the gospel. That is just one story among many of people whose lives have been completely turned around because of the real support of the Church.

The good example of our bishops and priests. Seeing a priest in prayer in front of the tabernacle in the Church is a big boost to one's own prayer life. When large public debates are carried out, the strong, clear and charitable voice of our bishops speaking out is a huge support to those of us who have to engage in staff room conversations with other people. With a few notable exceptions, this was absent in the recent same sex 'marriage' debate.

I am a convert to Catholicism from Islam. I converted because I witnessed people truly living the faith in little ways. This really made an impact on me.

We had a wonderful PP back in the 80's. He was an ex prison chaplain who had such a wonderful view of God's love and mercy and he freely shared it with all. The rigors of day-to-day parish life almost killed him and forced him into early retirement after he rolled his car and almost killed himself. I learned a lot about forgiveness from him. RIP Fr. [-].

From attendance at local charismatic Praise and Prayer meetings in the 80's, I experienced for the 1st time—the God of miracles and love—sharing with my sons this, I saw them receive unbelievable touches of God in their lives too.

I am so fortunate to have been educated in the Catholic faith at Catholic schools by wonderful lay teachers, all women (except for one high school maths teacher) and the Mercy nuns. There were some outstanding teachers among them, outstanding and inspiring human beings. I am so grateful. So my experience of the Catholic Church is mostly through women passing on the Faith. In that sense the dominance of male clergy in the Church has been more 'remote' to me. I am the eldest of six siblings and we were immersed in Catholic family life at home and in my extended family. Two of those families lived in the same street – seventeen cousins in all, attending our local parish Catholic school. Our family attended Mass every Sunday and at times we went to daily Mass and have been involved in the Catholic Church in various capacities over the years. So, even though I grew up in suburban Sydney in the 1960s and 70s I feel as though I was raised in a wonderful Catholic village. What a privilege and a joy! I am grateful for that experience and my education. I leave you with sharing a recent experience. Four years ago, my sister was involved in a car accident with her 13-yr-old son who sustained a serious head injury, torn ligaments from his neck and other injuries. He is recovering still and has made amazing progress, beyond our expectations. On the second night after the accident I had a dream with a message I felt was for my sister and her family and then for my local community and now the wider Church. In the dream, Mary the mother of God appeared on a balcony of a modern building, a building I have since recognised to be like that on the hill where Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church once stood at Terrigal. In the dream Mother Mary, looked very much like the Madonna in traditional garments – she was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. In the dream, her veil fluttered in the breeze and she said these words so clearly: 'I am with you and among you'.

I had a conventional 1950's upbringing in a devout (and large) Catholic family. I am still a practicing Catholic, and I put this down to the influence of parents, teachers (an outstanding Marist brother in secondary school) and the 3 years I spent in the Seminary post-school. Time in the seminary (MSC Order) allowed me to develop an adult appreciation of my faith, something

that is not possible at school level. The seminary staff were also outstanding people, who showed what a lived faith could look like.
As a child, I believed every word the priest uttered especially at missions when the talk was of damnation and fire. Cold mission nights were for me a horror. I was 10. No mention was made that Jesus is the saviour of the world, not just Catholics. Feasts and fasts were regulated in our home. During Mass the word saviour /redeemer is constantly used but not discussed very much. Today the institutional Church has been shown up for what it is, a triumphant exclusive power wielding irrelevant entity. John XXIII would be horrified! Thank heavens for Francis!
My wife and I were raised in average Catholic families. Our parents, as good and self-sacrificing as they were, were not prepared to form us in order to be able to deal with today's society. Both of us fell away from the faith, and had it not been for FEA and other organisations providing personal spiritual and character formation, together with family enrichment courses, we would probably have ended up with a broken family. Many have not been so fortunate.
The warm and welcoming spirit by the wonderful community at [-] parish where we have belonged for 30 years. To keep faith alive in the face of faltering Church leadership.
The conviction of Cardinal Pell has been a devastating moment for all of us in the Church. I have been buoyed by the coming together of many in the Church at this time.
The Catholic Youth Group, Antioch, kept me grounded, centred and cemented in my faith during my youth, in the 1980s, it is also where and how I met my husband of 26 years. I think youth groups and the formation of and support for youth leaders is vital in our Church communities.
Today I discovered that I can no longer describe ice cream as 'plain vanilla' without feeling that I have said an appalling and shameful thing. There are no words for the depth of my anger at the multiple layers of depravity, abuse of power, and concern for institutional interests that led to those infamous words being uttered in mitigation in a court of law. Is it the same righteous rage that led Jesus to drive the money changers out of the temple? We are indeed in a Lenten season and in need of purification.
If married clergy were permitted I would have joined the priesthood. There are certainly thousands of others who feel the same. This is not only the answer to the vocations crisis (and it is a crisis) but will go a long way to assuaging the fears and anxieties arising from the abuse scandal—improving Church governance in the manner described above will go the rest of the way.
Attending the Traditional Latin Mass has entirely changed my outlook on Catholicism, God and Spirituality, and for the better. For the good of everyone's souls, I encourage that they all attend.
I have just returned from the Stirring the Waters conference in Adelaide and I am overwhelmed by the 165 Catholic women who were there. I am referring to the women as 'Women of Jesus' because the work of these women, their spiritual depth was incredible. These women work from their spiritual depth inspired by Jesus stories in the gospels and how they have been formed by theological studies, of how we should be operating as a Church in Australia. These women quietly go about their work in the Church and I wonder why we are not inviting these women to participate in decision making in the Church. The spiritual and theological depth and their compassion are inspirational and their leadership in the Church would be a great asset to the people of the Church.
No, not until I see some dramatic and real changes to the Church, its structure and it needs to sincerely apologise for the damage it has caused to untold victims and young defenceless victims at that!
I was raised a Catholic, lapsed in my 20s, re-connected through my wife who is more fervent in her faith. I realise now I had a lot to learn about the faith.
Some parish priests ignore comments from laity making one feel useless. Many love the power we have given them, wrongly. They won't give it up easily. The Church then is not Christ-like.
My family history is rooted in generations of Irish-Australian Catholicism. The faith and practices of my parents, and their parents, must be honoured and cherished for the many good things it

gave rise to. But the intellectual world of those generations is not the one we inhabit today. So my hope is that we can respect but adapt and develop the religious commitments of the past by fashioning something that is equally compelling and enriching for good-hearted people in the intellectual and practical world of today.

WYDs have had such a positive impact on my faith journey, I am truly grateful for them.

I was raised Catholic and questioned why I still attended Mass regularly after I finished high school as many of my peers no longer attended. One weekend, I attended a different Church that had just had pilgrims speaking that had just returned from WYD Toronto. I knew a couple of them and they invited me to join their young adults group which I did for a couple of years. Since then I have attended 4 WYD's and this in conjunction with the belonging I found with that young adults group is the reason I still regularly attend Mass. It was through this young adult group I took ownership and my faith and it was no longer because my parents attended.

Being part of a warm, Catholic community has helped many women develop strong marriages and families by having a personal life of prayer, Eucharistic piety, regular Confession and constant, positive spiritual direction. This community has created a Catholic culture by celebrating Eucharistic processions, organising pilgrimages, retreats and other Catholic practices throughout the year. It was very moving to experience a family novena for the death of a loved one, celebrated with songs and prayers in the family home. The Church is where people gather in the name of Christ, not just in parishes but in families. Another positive experience has been Service Projects. Our Faith leads us to serve and this has helped a lot of young women expand their hearts and commit to greater ideals. Constant doctrinal formation has given girls and women the support they need to sustain their interior struggle and grow in human and supernatural virtues. Getting mothers and fathers involved directly with the spiritual and human formation of their daughters has also been a very positive experience.

I am cradle Catholic who lost their faith by 16 because I knew nothing of the beauty of the Catholic faith, only what my uncatechised parents had shared or passed on. I struggled to understand the teachings of the Church, they seemed out dated and oppressive. I was slowly moving away from all things Catholic and into the world of feminist atheism. By 17 and about to sit the HSC exams I was a non-attending, non-believing Catholic who knew nothing of the faith and was educated in the Catholic schools system about every other religion but mine. I hated what I did not know. My school had hired the Disciples Youth Mission Team (DYMT) to facilitate our Year 12 retreat. The DYMT is a work of the Disciples of Jesus Covenant Community. I refused to go. I couldn't see the point. The Catholic faith meant very little to me, the Church wanted to oppress me, control my life and I didn't believe in God anymore! When the DYMT came back to our school to follow up and run an afternoon I walked away from them as they were setting up. They knew from my senior uniform that I was part of the targeted audience. One of them, led by the Holy Spirit, followed me off the school premises and invited me to attend this seminar. I was skeptical but moved by this young person's bravery and genuine desire for me to participate. That night, whilst the DYMT spoke about God and the person of Jesus, shared their testimonies of conversion and about their friendship with Christ, I had a Massive conversion experience and a softening of my hardened heart. I cried for hours and felt the love of Jesus and His invitation to draw near to Him in a sacramental life. This night and the witness of young people, trendy, educated and sharing all of my interests but deeply in love with God and His Church, changed my path and my life forever. Before meeting them and hearing the Gospel of God's love for me, His saving power, His wanting to fulfil me, I was struggling with sin, I was drowning in despair and I was tempted by suicide regularly. The freedom I felt from this day onwards is indescribable. It was as though someone had taken chains that had bound me and released me from torment (I know Christ did all this and more for me)! The DYMT took my details, having watched me go from unwilling to talk or participate to publicly making a commitment to prayer and getting to know God. I became what they call a "young disciple" or YD. The DYMT then followed me up regularly and invited me to camps and retreats that they held to form YD's in the faith and lead them into the life of the

Church. I started going to daily Mass and weekly confession and I started reading theology and listening to Catholic preachers. I couldn't get enough of the Truth of The Church founded by Christ! Suddenly Her teachings were relevant, made sense, I was no longer skeptical but free. Young people need to hear the Gospel but not watered down, the whole truth spoken in love, they like challenges.
As a convert I received such good sound doctrine from those around me. Our children and grandchildren attend a wonderful school, [-] and [-] with virtues program and both parents and children are taught the example of Christ and how we live this in our daily life.
Opus Dei Some 25 years ago I went, very reluctantly I must say, to an afternoon presentation dedicated to John Paul II's 1993 encyclical, Veritatis Splendor, at [-] school for Girls, with talks given by the Chaplain, Father [-], a priest of Opus Dei and the soon to be Principal, Dr [-], a celibate member of Opus Dei. I say I went very reluctantly because I had heard so much negative propaganda about Opus Dei and only attended because a good friend had been substitute teaching at [-] and was very impressed with the orthodoxy and genuine love for the Faith she saw being passed on there. Prior to this we'd both attended a talk on the encyclical at a venue near [-] church at [-] where many priests and religious were in attendance and were very disturbed at the lack of unity with the Holy Father and obvious hostility to him. (This was also played out on national television on the ABC's Four Corners programme dedicated to the encyclical. At [-] one Nun even called out angrily how the Gospel showed Jesus's compassion and forgiveness of the woman caught in adultery but failed to mention his parting words to her, "Go and sin no more." By contrast, at the [-] talks, the atmosphere was one of peace, love and unity with the teachings of the Pope (our Christ on earth) in that encyclical and so eventually, after about 3 or 4 years of attending similar helpful and valuable talks, days of Recollection and Retreats, I felt God was calling me to Opus Dei. I have been a member for 22 years and have been helped enormously to seek Him by striving for personal holiness in my ordinary daily life, in my work and relationships, backed up by daily prayer and the reception of the sacraments, especially daily Mass and Holy Communion and also frequent Confession where I can receive loving spiritual direction and encouragement.
The Church has become merely another 'social justice' organisation. It seems embarrassed about Christ and the Church's doctrines. There is too much capitulation to the secular culture and justifying our beliefs by the prevailing cultural premises. The faithful can be inspired by courageous, believing, compassionate priests and bishops.
The community that I belong to has enabled me to grow spiritually and to be able to reach out to other families and encourage them on their faith journey. It has enabled me to mentor other couples in their relationships and also to raise leaders.
I grew up with parents who were members of Opus Dei, and went to a school founded by Opus Dei. This school organisation saw parents as the first and primary educators of children. I believe the incredible faith of my parents, and the decency and philosophy of the school I attended have been central to the formation of my own faith. Being able to see all people in the world as people I need to care for regardless of our differences has been a major lesson that I have learnt and that I cherish.
I have always had a strong and active Catholic faith. My parents are still active members of their community, although my siblings rarely attend Church, which I find to be a common experience. Lives are busy and many do not find the time to attend Church. I believe this could turn around with stronger parish communities. The faith of Catholic people needs to be restored in the Church which hopefully would happen over time with changes in the Catholic hierarchy and the ministry of the faith. We need to celebrate the positives of our community and of our Church and make the Church a place where people go to feel welcomed and connected.
When I was younger, priests acted like genuine father figures and role models—they had a simple but strong love of God and went out of their way to help their flock in their day-to-day lives. Now

many act more like public servants—just there to do a job with as little effort as possible given that their heart is not completely in it.

When I have felt despondent about the crimes committed by the priests detailed in the Royal Commission I try to remind myself that there are priests practising today like Father Chris Riley, whose charity Youth Off the Streets is a shining example of the important and selfless work that a dedicated priest does every day of his life if he has truly been called by God. His service is awe inspiring and makes me remember that the Catholic Church is also filled with many dedicated and devout priests who are willing to sacrifice so much to serve others and that is something to celebrate. Also in the world at the moment where there is a lot of hostility towards organised religion I remind myself that the Catholic Church has also been a great force for good in the world and the messages of Christ are really the best and only ones to live your life by.

I went to my local parish school in [-] which was run by Nuns. It was wonderful and the Nuns were very kind and taught us all well. I then went to [-] College, Wahroonga where I was taught by Christian Brothers. They were kind and taught me well. I have fond memories of them. My children go to independent Catholic schools [-] School for Girls and [-] College and the teachers and the Catholic Chaplain priests at each of these schools are great at teaching and helping build my children's faith. So I just wanted to share positive stories.

I am very fortunate to have received good formation from the very start through my mother (my father died early), the holy and prayerful priests in our parish in the Philippines and through the nuns in school who taught us good doctrine. In Australia, I go to regular formation—recollections, retreats and frequent reception of the sacraments. A monthly recollection and a yearly retreat are necessary together with more frequent than just Sunday Mass attendance in our journey to know and love Christ. I see clearly that God is continuously forming me to what He wants me to be—through the contradictions I encounter daily. The more I see my weaknesses, the more I see God's love for me, the more I understand and love my family and those He has placed close to me. I could love generously because I have experienced God's love. Regular encounter with God through prayer and the sacraments helps me experience Him more each day.

Born in Qld in the time of change in the Church, one of 10 children of whom 6 were born alive, my parents trusted the local Catholic education with our faith. We didn't have family prayers but our parents loved God, were open to life, active in the prolife movement and the Australian Family Association, attended Sunday Mass. Not one child left Catholic schools with a commitment to their faith. We were robbed by a Catholic education system that did not form disciples of Christ, did not pass on the knowledge of the true presence of Christ in the Blessed sacrament or teach about chastity and abstinence when it came to human sexuality. We were given contraceptive talks to show us how to not to achieve pregnancy but not how to wait, to practice abstinence and chastity. Sin was hardly mentioned and the 10 Commandments were barely mentioned, less we remembered any. Prayer groups consisted of lying down on a floor in the dark with the lights out trying to praying. In 1995 my parents sent to us a Thomas More Centre Winter school in Queensland. Organised by [-] with guest speakers including then Auxiliary Bishop of Melbourne, Bishop [-]. After one speaker had told us our faith formation was useless, I rose to my feet in anger. "My parents wasted time and money by putting me through Catholic Schools, what do I do now?" Bishop [-] said "Open the Catechism of the Catholic Church." Myself and two of my 6 siblings went home to devour the newly released Catechism. We discovered Our Lady of Akita (approved by the Church) new Catholic friends. I had a heated discussion with a now deceased friend at the winter school. Whose responsibility was it to pass on the faith? I thought my parents, but he thought, Nuns and priests. One year later I was burying my mother, dead in 6 weeks from bowel cancer. 3 years later on November 11th my friend who had who had received the Brown Scapular at an event to honour Our Lady of Fatima had dropped dead aged 30. I married in 2001, buried my first son in 2002, 4 days after my friend's birthday and 3 after before my mother's 6th anniversary. I am indebted to the now Cardinal [-] for his wise words that gave me the courage to rediscover the faith the school had failed me on. I have now 6 of my 7 children to bring them to

the fullness of faith to reach the Beatific vision in Heaven. As we discover the awesome wonder of the Holy Catholic Mass, of the awesome gift of Christ in the Blessed sacrament, we are drawn to the Extraordinary form of the Mass where we seek the silence to walk with Christ on Calvary and receive him in the one flesh union in Holy Communion. All children are doing the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd which permeates their whole being drawing them into relationship with the Good Shepherd who leads us to still waters and green pastures. We pray our bishops realize the errors of the 19 70's, 80's and 90's to return to forming children of God—the Holy Eucharist that is the source and summit of life.
Involvement in the Brisbane based menAlive organisation has brought great inspiration in my pursuit to be a man of God.
My faith has been shaped by my family, going to my local parish Masses, going to youth group, going to ACYF, hearing about World Youth Day.
Yes. My wife has been to every weekly Mass for 30 years that we have lived together and she has not been baptised because until she attends various tick box sessions she can't be recognised as a member. Ritual and process are everything!
I'm a woman, I love God above all else in this world. I want to serve him however it makes me so extremely sad that the Catholic Church will not let me become a priest or even a deacon. My mum who has 2 kids and is a single mother while running her own business is putting herself through uni to study theology in the hope she can one day become a deacon. I get so sad and angry that in this modern day my mum who shows unwavering faith may still not be able to serve God as a deacon. Want to know why the percentage of Australians identifying as Catholics are decreasing and 'no religion' and 'new age' religions accelerating? Because people, society and ideas are progressing while Catholicism needs to update to remain relevant in people's lives.
Recently I attended at SCS opening Mass in the IW region of Sydney. The altar was full of men. The congregation was full of women. The two never met. It was a powerful visual for me about the state of the Church.
I was in New Caledonia for 5 years in the sixties. At that time the population was between 70,000 and 80,000. The Catholic priests were 47, 45 Missionaries and 2 Autochthones, most of them dislocated in the major centres. There were many Christian tribes on the mountains which had no resident priest but all of them had a local Catechist. The Catechists would organize the daily prayers and the Sunday Scripture readings. They would keep the parish priest informed about new births and deaths in the tribe and marriages to be blessed. They would also inform the Tribe people of the priest's visit, which would take place on a week day sometimes every 2 weeks and sometimes once a month. Obviously the Holy sacrament was not kept in the tribe, the Catechist could not celebrate funeral, marriages and exceptionally, in case of dying children he was allowed to baptize them. The Catholic Community was vibrant. I went back to New Caledonia in 2015 and I have enquired about the Church situation. The population has increased to 250,000. The priest's number has decreased to 16, but there are 18 Deacons to help. What surprised me it was when I went to a centre in the north of the Island. In the 60s in that centre there was a resident priest, in 2015 there was none, yet there was a community of nuns complaining that they had no daily Mass and could not receive the Holy Eucharist. The 18 Deacons operate as assistant to the priests who are generally located in the cities. There was also a sort of antagonism between the Deacons and the Catechists of the tribes. In my view the Catechists should have been given the proper formation, been ordained Deacons and left to serve the tribe they live in with the ability to keep the Holy Eucharist, to do baptism, Marriages and Funerals. Other Deacons could have been placed in other villages and in the centres deprived of priests and Catechists. The 16 priests then would be itinerant and visiting the various centres to strengthen the faith of the faithful and their immediate pastors. Pope Francis himself expressed the view that the clericalism in the Church should disappear. To have a commanding Church and the silent and obedient Church doesn't reflect the intention and the will of Jesus. Just this morning 24 November members of the Catholic Church, together with members of the Anglican, the Presbyterian, the Baptist, the Uniting, the

Alliance Churches have prayed in one voice for the success of the Plenary Council. Isn't this a sign? Isn't this an invitation to unity coming from the Holy Spirit? B.S. and SVdP Members [-] Catholic parish 24 November 2018
A divorcee not allowed to take communion became disaffected from the Church. Lack of discussion relating to social issues, such as contraception and LGBTI community, blocking people engaging with Church. Parents sought advice from a priest relating to the topic of masturbation for their child but just told it is not allowed—seen as lack of understanding of their needs and the needs of their child—pushed them away from the Church.
We have included 3 files which are some resources which we found useful to show during our sacramental programs for the children (and their parents) which were very simple to understand. These types of videos are just a small example of the many resources out there that our priests can use in explaining the sacraments.
We attend [-] which was a vibrant parish when the Passionist order were there. Down to earth priests, caring and sharing and involved with the people. Homilies were from the heart, very important. Everyone loved going to Mass. Now unfortunately it is so conservative, homilies are mostly read, not much interaction and the congregation has dwindled, sad state of affairs.
I reflect on movements nearer to my God and I think they were in times of lengthy solitude and quiet and not in times of great rallies.
My faith was shaped by coming into contact with The Passionist priests, when they were operating out of the Monastery at [-] in Sydney. Father [-] was mostly responsible for a Church to be opened in [-], which is called [-]. His style of ministry, and the Passionist Fathers, is more like the way I think Jesus would have liked his Church to be.
I was a Catholic who struggled to attend Church every Sunday. Never quite understanding why I had to go. Then my Dad asked me at the age of approx 22 to start praying daily the Rosary. Wow! since that day my whole understanding of the Church and faith has changed immensely. Over time Mary has helped my faith increase in a way no one else could. Today I am very much involved with the Church and have learnt so much about Jesus, thanks to Mary!!!
I attended one of the most orthodox Catholic schools in Sydney, [-] College. It is no coincidence that the rate of vocations coming out of this school over the past 5 years is proportionally far higher than any other school. Young people want to be challenged and value their faith so much more when it forces them to make sacrifices. A deep faith is far more important than a vague feeling of community that will fade when the next social opportunity presents itself to a young man or woman.
I love the public processions we use to do in childhood and now partake in them as adults in the CBD of Sydney. It's a pity not all diocese do the same. This should also be done on Mary's feast days because 'Mary help of Christians' is the patron and guardian of Australia. Open practice of our faith ratifies and confirms others in faith—it's essential to do this as a country throughout the country!! Celebrate like it's another Australia Day, it will grow as more seek to know more about Our Queen, who also in turn will multiply her graces towards us and our Country. Bishops, stand up and be bold!
The sense of community really affected me as a young person. That's now not very common in the majority of parishes I've encountered. It seems to be now left to the individual whether people look out for each other or not. I organise the sacramental program on our parish and that seems a great way to build a community but everyone is so time poor that doesn't always happen. Sadly, another experience I've encountered is the affect a priest can have on a parish if his people skills are poor. Many people are hurt in these encounters and so leave the parish and this then affects friends and family members.
I recently had the pleasure of attending a Men's Breakfast at North Harbour parish in Sydney. There were a group of 40 men gathered (including two of our priests, school dads as well as parishioners from both of our Churches) to enjoy a great bacon and eggs breakfast before we listened to Steve Lia tell us about his spiritual journey, going from being a non-Mass attending

nominal Catholic to becoming a spirit filled Catholic who is prepared to stand up and tell his story. Steve is a member of the menAlive Catholic ministry whose mission is the development and strengthening of men as fathers, men and Catholics through events like breakfasts, Fatherhood talks and Men's parish retreats. The breakfast was an opportunity for men to connect and share some of their own stories over breakfast before we heard about Steve's journey. The general feeling of the group was that we need more of these gatherings where men get together, share a meal and hear talks on everything from faith journeys to men's health. The breakfast was sponsored by Manly Catenians on behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council. Catenians are an international Catholic men's group who foster friendship and support for its members and have committed to organizing more breakfasts and talks through 2019. Events like this men's breakfast, or talks on fatherhood and men's health, are practical ways for men who are notoriously not good social networkers to connect and create a community among the school, Church and non-practicing Catholics.

I have always been a Catholic. I studied for the priesthood as a young man. Faith is important to me and Church has always been the pathway to express it. I have been involved in voluntary work in parish for almost 40 years. I have served on parish Councils and finance committees. I have also run a voluntary charity for nearly 20 years. My faith in God is still strong but the evil of child sexual abuse and the response to it has shattered my faith in Church. One example of many was to see Bishop [-] use a defence of dementia to mitigate his sentence was shocking. He was still a serving bishop. He should have been fired immediately. If he was demented then he should be removed from office. Without the intervention of [-], I doubt he even would have stood aside.

An answer to long enduring prayer for a dramatic change in a member of the family, which was also confirmed by the presence of God through someone outside out family.

I have grown up in a Catholic family, who do not practice. I went to a Catholic school for 2 years, a public school for 5 years (where I received weekly religious classes), and I attended an independent school (with Catholic pastoral care). At the Catholic school and during the weekly religious classes whilst attending the public school, I was never taught the true and deeper meanings of the Faith. I went to "Church", not "Mass", and I was not given examples of virtues. It was not until I went to high school where I was surrounded by families who lived their Faith outside of Sunday Mass, who lived a unity of life. Their good example was the biggest testimony to Faith and how to follow in the footsteps of Christ. It was natural, and people were not afraid of what others thought. This is true understanding of the Faith, which I believe the Australian Catholic Church should focus on reviving. This may be harsh, but the first step to achieve this is by challenging and expelling priests who are teaching and preaching heresies.

I was raised a Catholic however once I started university, I knew that I had to explore my own beliefs and whether I believed in Catholic teaching. I started at UNSW and came across the Catholic society who motivated and encouraged me in my faith significantly through fellowship, opportunities for doctrine classes, the witness of religious communities, Bible studies, the opportunity for daily Mass, regular confession as well as being given a sense of responsibility in continuing the evangelisation of souls. Being supported by well-formed leaders helped me to come to know the Catholic faith on a deeper level than I had ever had before, it allowed me to openly ask questions about my faith and I did not have to look far to find the answers. The reverence shown by the leaders in the Church when I had the opportunity to observe them in Mass or during means of formation, helped me to see that the Catholic Church offers something completely different to what society is offering today. I was so attracted to the reverence shown to the Eucharist through regular adoration and through traditional Masses I attended. By traditional, I mean they sung hymns throughout, the homilies were well thought out and straight to the point, the priests said the words to the consecration slowly and meaningfully. I was able to observe on many occasions the immense love shared by the priest as he said Mass and when he gave his conversion story. Through priest's example I was able to witness the power of God's love and His greatness. I was able to learn that I am worthy and loved even in my brokenness. A priest

recently has been the key support for me as I have battled with emotional wounds of the past through the means of spiritual direction. This experience has helped me to find healing in Jesus Christ and reassurance that the Church does not call the perfect but rather, it calls the broken and sinners to come and be healed by Christ. I have never felt more blessed than I have this year to call myself a Catholic because I have witnessed God's healing and love. The gift of confession is incredible, and it has only been the past year where I have truly understood its significance. I feel that growing up I saw confession as an obligation and I did not understand its purpose however having received formation and education on what confession is, and through hearing the testimonies of other Catholics who use confession regularly, I have been motivated to go weekly whenever possible. I also had the opportunity to see parts of the SEEK 2019 conference in the USA. Having the opportunity to watch the talks online and see the universality of the Church and the talks of Catholic speakers from around the world has helped significantly in showing me I am not alone and that the Church is so beautiful when we support each other, always go back to Jesus' word and make amends when we fall. Doctrine has impacted me most and the example of our leaders who work trustingly with the Holy Father.

I really believe that we as a people of God are being called to deepen our faith and for Christian Meditation has been the path for me to attempt to do that.

I was fortunate enough to live in very close proximity to the Blessed sacrament recently. The access I had to Exposition changed my life completely. I learned to bring everything to Jesus and surrender daily.

Stories were about the difficulty of explaining "Why I am still a Catholic? The Sexual abuse cover up is" an utter disgrace". Another story was about an incident where Church authorities demanded a person break the law by change an audited financial statement. Stories indicated major faith formation came from families.

Catholic school experiences in 1950'd and 1960's with respect to developing love of God, Church and one another.

I'm 42 years old and a wife and mother of 3. I have 2 University degrees and I love God. I love the Catholic Church I love the sacraments I love Mass. My love for these things came from all the very good and holy friends I have that have been such a good example to me. Including faithful and holy priests and religious who live celibacy faithfully. And including good married couples who are open to life and accept the many children that God sends them without contraception. It came from adoration. Beautiful traditional liturgy that helped me enter into the Mass more deeply. Regular confession. Studying my faith as an adult. It did not come from making the Mass more modern with rock music. Or having more roles as a woman in the liturgy or more laity on the altar. I do not think the Church teachings need to change. We need to change increase our prayer, turn off the TV, pray. Bring back beautiful music into the Church that is designed to bring us closer to God. Increase adoration to pray for our priests. I do not agree with making celibacy voluntary or doing away with it. It is important and achievable with God's grace. Bring back the sacred into the liturgy ... Incense, silence, chant, real candles, dignity to the greatest miracle that happens every day on the altar. Every parish should have 2-3 hours of confession available a week so people have the grace to live how Christ teaches us. Rather than wanting to change Christ's teachings parishes should offer Instructions in the catechism of the Church and marriage to improve marriages. Crying rooms so struggling mothers can attend Mass daily with their children without worrying about others being disturbed. Extra confession times for mothers so they can get to confession whilst watching their children and not disturbing others. Confession at night for people who work. I think Catholic schools should be attended by people who love the Faith not by people who do not care about God. And only teachers who practice their faith should be allowed to teach at Catholic schools and keep the commandments and attend Mass each Sunday. The Churches' teachings on marriage and openness to life should be clearly taught from the pulpit. People need to hear from the pulpit that it's mortal sin to miss Sunday Mass, or receive communion in a state of mortal sin. It's a mortal sin to use contraception and masturbate and to have premarital sex or

homosexual sex. Or to enter into second marriages if the first marriage hasn't been annulled or a spouse deceased. These are things Catholics don't know anymore. Even good Catholics who attend Mass each week don't know these things. I can't tell you how many Sunday going Mass attendees have told me they have been sterilised to prevent having further children. Yet they go to communion and think there is nothing wrong with this.
In Fifth class I had a Marist Brother called [-] as my class teacher. I took [-] as my Confirmation name. He suggested that we give our Guardian Angel a name which I did, I called him Stephen and have developed a relationship with him.
When my wife of 20 years decided our marriage was over and left me totally devastated, it was my faith in God that saw me seek comfort in private prayer, I felt I could ask God for help to cope and I am sure that it was granted all of thirty years ago. It was a matter between my God and me and still is.
As families migrated from Singapore—we miss the Eucharistic adoration chapels. In Singapore, there is a 24 hour Adoration place and most of the parish have daily Adoration from morning 6am to 10pm. Here in [-], we wait for the First Friday adoration days available in [-] Cathedral or [-] Church [-].
I served the Church as a nun for over 30 years, taught Thomistic philosophy to laypeople and seminarians, and am still active in Catholic circles. Despite negative experiences and the shame of the current crisis, I will never leave the Church.
My story in a nutshell is in the first paragraph. I witnessed family break ups, mental break downs, bias, wars big and small, people leaving the Church, growing indifferent ... —all because of our religion. Or rather, because of the way the Church presents God's message and the lifestyles and actions it fosters, all propelled by the desire to teach, enforce ideal world, change hearts, purify, "save" everybody. Myself, I am Slavic and reflecting on these issues, I am not sure what I should call my "religion". I am not sure, we should actually call the faith or our teachings "a religion". But as I said, so far, I have not discovered a better system (save for all those things that need to be improved!). Once, in a hospital, I realised that all that matters is being, life, light, joy, goodness and that I am part of God and no religion is needed. So, my life experience leads me to cry for a change too. Change of the Church. Yes, my cry too is propelled by the desire for betterment. I say it again. Something has got to substantially change with the way we present and practice the faith. The exodus of the young and the creation of weirdos have been going on for too long. Present-day generation does not relate to outdated services and symbols from centuries ago, does not relate to abnormal lifestyles, needs more comprehensive, open and sensitive explanations, and a more all-encompassing/open/generous, that is a MORE CATHOLIC system. We need to embrace/allow other traditions or even religious views/practices into our own, for we traditionally think of God being so generous! Look at all the expressions about God throughout the history. They were not only allowed to come to exist, but for the best part were nourished to very fruitful, useful, beautiful, enriching ... Surely, Jesus (and we with him!) did not come to abolish the old laws -in whichever tradition- but to give them the meaning. Our services need to empower us more than humble us, need to motivate (kick to motion) us to action more that sedate us with focus. Body language is very important. It should be more open, positive, welcoming, not crunching and breaking us (such as kneeling). More than constantly repeating how great God is and pleading for mercy, our liturgies need to cultivate in us a sense of oneness with God, with everyone, with everything, yes, even the sense of our divinity! As demonstrated by Jesus, and they need to nurture the whole being not just the "spirit". We need to make these changes worldwide and pretty quickly. In this young country we can be a good example or a prototype of an updated expression of the faith suited for the generations to come, or at least send a strong message to Rome or those globally competent. Please, change to live. Please. I would appreciate if you could please let me know your thoughts, more importantly, how this contribution/sharing/feedback will be considered by the Plenary Council. I am open to be contacted on [-]

This is from one of the participants' story. As a child, I loved listening to scripture; it has been a stepping-stone to my faith. I have also being a Scripture Teacher in [-] for 10 years. Every Sunday. I was in tune with the readings of the day. Prepared from Children's Bible, explained the readings, set up a little altar, prepared a prayer for today which the children took home and had a candle and symbols that reflect the Scripture e.g. Cross-donkey-statues.

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 Broken Bay.

Country	Number of respondents
Australia	352
Afghanistan	1
Austria	1
Belize	1
Canada	3
Chile	1
China	2
Czech Republic	1
Egypt	2
Fiji	1
France	1
Germany	3
Hong Kong (S.A.R.)	7
Hungary	1
India	2
Indonesia	2
Ireland	5
Italy	7
Kenya	2
Malaysia	9
Malta	4

Country	Number of respondents
Netherlands	4
New Zealand	12
Papua New Guinea	2
Peru	3
Philippines	16
Singapore	2
Slovakia	1
Slovenia	1
South Africa	3
South Korea	1
Spain	6
Sri Lanka	5
Sweden	1
Switzerland	1
Timor-Leste	1
Uganda	2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	21
United States of America	8
Not stated	89
Total	587

APPENDIX 2: COMPLETE LIST OF GROUPS FROM YOUR DIOCESE

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

Name of group	Group size
Pared Foundation	1,920
St Agatha's Catholic Parish	1,000
Hornsby Cathedral Parish	759
Divine Will	750
Mercy Catholic College	708
Mercy Catholic College	650
St Paul's Catholic College Manly	530
National Association of Catholic Families	500
Eremeran Hills	400
Mater Maria Catholic College Warriewood	340
St Patrick's Catholic Primary School`	200
Lindfield-Killara Catholic Parish	200
Yr 11 Stds Mater Maria Catholic College Warriewood	140
Diocese of Broken Bay	100
Manly Freshwater Parish	100
Lindfield Killara Catholic Parish	100
St Edwards	85
Parish Animators Broken Bay Diocese	84
St Augustine's College, Brookvale NSW	82
Clergy & Principals Gathering Broken Bay	80
St Joseph's Catholic College East Gosford	80
St Joseph's Catholic College East Gosford	80
SJ Around the Bay	70
Catholic Community of North Harbour	70
Lindfield Killara Parish	66
Clergy Diocese of Broken Bay	65
Our Lady of Dolours Catholic School	60
Manly Freshwater Parish Women of Faith series participants	60
St Lucy's School	52
OLPS School	50
St Edmund's College	47
Parish Animators Broken Bay	45
Association of School Principals, Diocese of Broken Bay	44
St Anthony in the Fields Church, Terrey Hills	42

Name of group	Group size
Parish of Holy Cross Kincumber	40
Family Enrichment Australia	40
Manly Catenians	40
St Bernard's Primary School	34
St Bernard's Primary School	34
St Cecilia's Primary School	32
Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School The Entrance	31
St Edwards	30
St Edwards	30
Acclaim Youth Chatswood Parish	30
Catechists	30
Nairana Study Centre university students	25
Frenchs Forest Catholic Parish 2	24
St Bernard's	24
St Bernard's Berowra	24
St Bernard's Berowra	24
St Bernard's Berowra	23
Corpus Christi Parish, St Ives	23
Corpus Christi Parish	23
Corpus Christi Parish	23
Corpus Christi Parish	23
Corpus Christi Parish	23
Corpus Christi Parish	23
St John Fisher Catholic Primary School	22
Parents/Carers of St Lucy's School	22
Corpus Christi Parish, St Ives	22
Frenchs Forest Catholic Parish - Family Group Representatives	20
St Kieran's Manly Vale	20
Corpus Christi Parish	18
Corpus Christi Parish	18
Corpus Christi Parish	18
Southern Cross Care	17
St Anthony in the Fields Church Terrey Hills	16
St Edwards	16
"Come as You Are"	16
OLR The Entrance	16
Prayer and Reflection Group	16
Pymble Catholic Parish	16

Name of group	Group size
Frenchs Forest Catholic Parish 3	15
Lindfield Killara Parish	15
Catechists	14
CWL	14
Denistone	14
Parish Pastoral Council North Harbour NSW	13
Parish Pastoral Council	13
Parent group for sacramental prep	13
Social Justice Group at Our Lady Star of the Sea, Terrigal Parish	13
Mater Maria Staff	13
Kuringai Chase Parish Pastoral Council Dialogue and Listening Session 1	12
New Perspectives for Catholic Education	12
Pymble Catholic Parish Altar Society	12
St Patrick's Parish Gosford	12
Pymble Catholic Parish Altar Society	12
St Edwards	12
Hills 1 Cooperators	12
OLPS	11
Wall Family	11
Corpus Christi Parish, St Ives	11
Corpus Christi Parish, St Ives	11
Corpus Christi Parish	11
Terrigal St Vincent de Paul Society	10
Stella Maris religion class Year 9	10
St Vincent de Paul Group, Hornsby Parish	10
Holy Cross Parish Sacramental Preparation Parents Group	10
Social	10
Tarrawarra Group Lindfield Killara parish	10
Addition to Tarrawarra Group Lindfield Killara Parish Lindfield	10
Lindfield parish	10
Lindfield parish	10
Young Adults, St Anthony in the Fields	10
Corpus Christi, St Ives	10
St Bernard's Berowra	9
St Philip Neri Catholic School, Northbridge, NSW	9
St Mary's Toukley	9
Concerned Parishioners	9
Catechist facilitators	9

Name of group	Group size
Corpus Christi Young Adults Lectio group	9
Saint Vincent de Paul Asquith 2077	9
Holy Cross parish sacramental preparation parents group	9
Lindfield Killara Catholic Parish	9
St Patrick's War Memorial Church, East Gosford	8
Kincumber Parish Prayer Group	8
CLC Prayer Group Kincumber	8
Corpus Christi, St Ives	8
St Mary's Toukley	8
Our Lady of the Rosary Primary School	8
Pymble Catholic Parish Serra International	8
Serra International Pymble Catholic Parish	8
Pymble Catholic Parish Bible Study Group	8
Pymble Catholic Parish-Bible Study Group	8
CLC prayer group	8
Scripture Group	8
Bruno Spedalieri	8
St John's Pastoral Council	8
OLR The Entrance	8
Lindfield Parish	8
Friends of St. Augustine	8
Lindfield Killara Catholic Parish	8
Pymble Catholic Parish	7
Pymble Catholic Parish	7
Stella Maris Year 9	7
SJB teachers	7
Year 8 Stella Maris	7
Year 8 Stella Maris	7
Stella Maris College	7
Holy Cross Parish Sacramental Parent Group	7
OLR The Entrance	7
Parents and Friends of LGBTIQ Catholics, FFCP	7
Concerned friends	7
Tangara School - 10Rust - Group 4	7
Lindfield Killara Parish	7
Pymble Catholic Parish General Parishioners Meeting 23 January 2019	7
Frenchs Forest Catholic Parish 1	6
Frenchs Forest Catholic Parish	6

Name of group	Group size
Parish Pastoral Council Holy Cross Parish Kincumber 2251	6
OLPS West Pymble School	6
Group from St Mary MacKillop Parish, Warnervale	6
St. Martin's Davidson	6
St. Martins, Davidson prayer group	6
Social Justice Committee	6
Our Lady of Good Counsel, Forestville	6
KBSG	6
Year 8 Stella Maris College	6
Liturgy Committee	6
Year 8 Stella Maris College	6
Year 7 Stella Maris	6
Canisius Community Group 1	6
St Edwards	6
Corpus Christi Parish	6
OLR The Entrance	6
Wayfarers	6
Tangara School - 10Rust - Group 3	6
French Forest Parish	6
Couples for Christ Australia	6
Wyong Catholic Parish	6
Lindfield Killara Parish	6
AFCM Intercession Group	6
St Vincent de Paul	5
Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Wyoming	5
Light of the World Prayer Group	5
Kuringgai Chase Catholic parish	5
Sacred Heart Mona Vale	5
Sacred Heart Mona Vale	5
Sacred Heart	5
Catechist Group	5
Sacred Heart Mona Vale Parents	5
Broken Bay Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Ministry	5
Parent Sacramental Prep Group	5
Parent Group Sacramental Program	5
Pymble Catholic Parish Acolytes Group	5
Residents Belrose Country Club Retirement Village	5
Parish Young Adults group	5

Name of group	Group size
Parish Young Adults Group	5
Family group	5
Marinov family	5
St Joseph's Narrabeen	5
Tangara School - 10Rust - Group 1	5
Tangara School - 10Rust - Group 2	5
St John the Baptist Catholic School	5
The Lakes Parish of Collaroy and Narrabeen	5
The Lakes Parish of Collaroy Plateau Narrabeen	5
The Lakes Parish of Collaroy Plateau Narrabeen	5
OLR Wyoming NSW	4
Pastoral Council small group-Ku-ring-gai chase Catholic parish	4
Kuringgai Chase Catholic Parish	4
St Patricks Gosford	4
St Patrick's dialogue session 30th September	4
OLPS School	4
OLPS School	4
Sacramental Parents Group	4
One group part of the Broken Bay Diocesan Assembly	4
Year 8 Stella Maris	4
Pymble Catholic Parish - SH Readers Group	4
BB.Diocesan Assembly	4
Lakes Parish Narrabeen	4
Risk Insurance Communication Skills	4
St Joseph's Catholic College	4
The Lakes Parish Narrabeen / Collaroy	4
Corpus Christi Parish, St Ives	4
Wyong Catholic Parish	4
Kuring gai Chase Parish Dialogue Session September 8	3
On behalf of St Bernard's Berowra 8 September	3
Kuring-Gai Chase Parish	3
Terrigal Sisterhood	3
Women's prayer group St Patrick's Asquith	3
Lakes Parish	3
Lindfield - Killara Meditation Group	3
Zemek family	3
St Bernard's School	2
Ku-Ring-Gai Chase Catholic Parish	2

Name of group	Group size
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic School	2
Peter and Leisha Stevens	2
Tony and Carmel Smith	2
Peter and Leisha Stevens	2
St Leo's Catholic College Wahroonga NSW	Not Stated
Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay, Staff of Chancery, CatholicCare & CSO	Not Stated
Hornsby Parish Parishioners	Not Stated
Yr5 SRE Class Waitara PS	Not Stated
St Francis of Assisi, Paddington	Not Stated
Hornsby Cathedral Parish	Not Stated
Pittwater Parish	Not Stated
Frenchs Forest Parish Social Justice Group	Not Stated
SVDP Frenchs Forest Parish Broken Bay	Not Stated
Hornsby Cathedral Parish	Not Stated
Yrs 5 & 6 State School Students Hornsby Cathedral Parish	Not Stated

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