



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

# Final Report for Phase I: Listening and Dialogue

*A Report to the Archdiocese of Perth*

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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

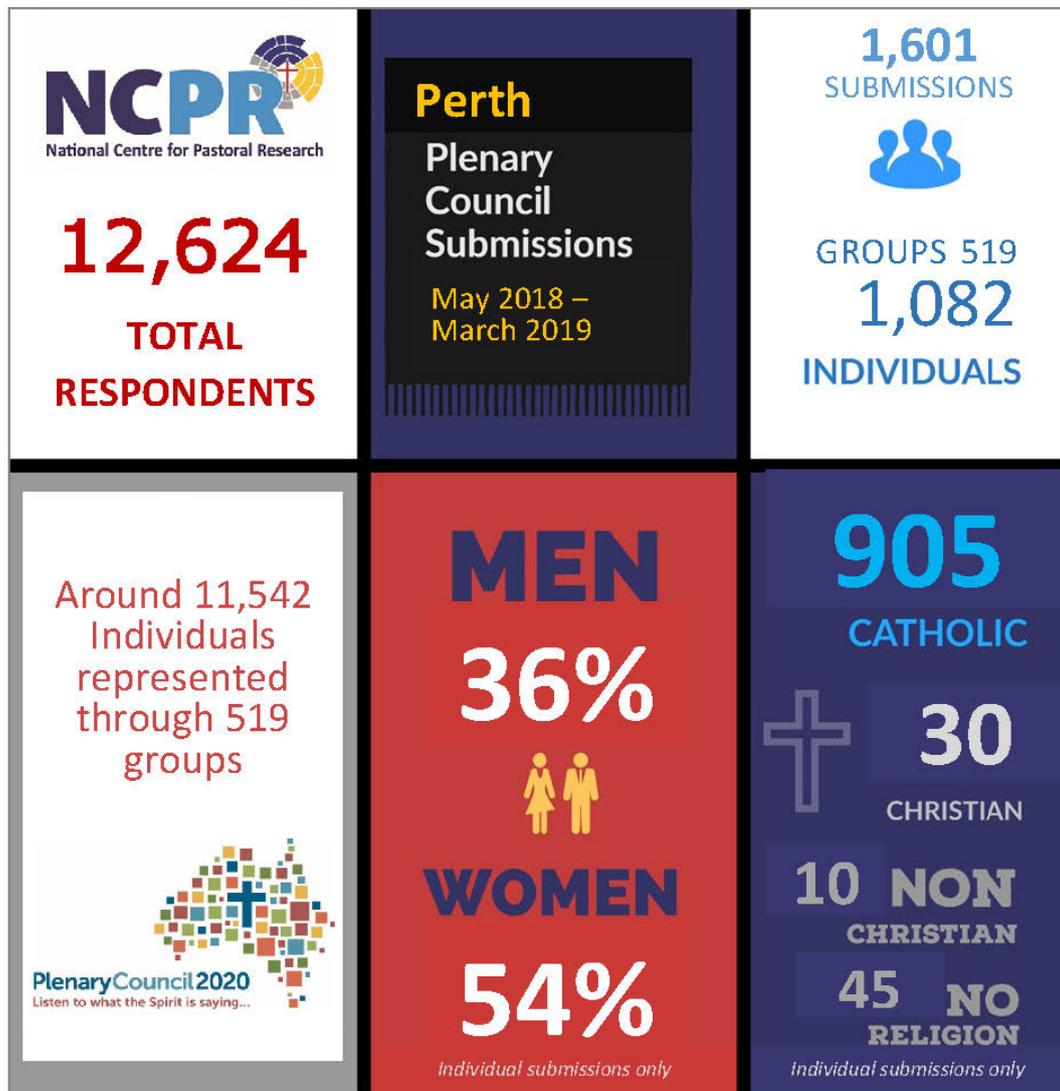
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## Diocesan Submissions Summary Snapshot: May 2018—March 2019



## 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 - Perth

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 Archdiocese of Perth, we received a total of 1,601 completed responses from May 2018 until 13 March 2019. Of these, 984 respondents had participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter, while another 150 were unsure if they had. About 454 respondents indicated that they had not participated in a Listening and Dialogue Encounter.

Of the 1,601 submissions, 519 submissions were from groups or organisations and 1,082 submissions were from individuals. There were 11,542 people represented through the 519 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 12,624.

<b>Table 1: Number of Submissions</b>	
<b>Total number of submissions received</b>	<b>1,601</b>
<b><i>Participated in Listening &amp; Dialogue Encounter?</i></b>	
Yes	984
No	454
Not sure	150
Not stated	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,601</b>
Submissions received from groups or organisations	519
Submissions received from individuals	1,082
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,601</b>

## INDIVIDUAL SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March 2019, a total of 1,082 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 Perth. Figure 1 is a graphical representation of the same table. About 48 per cent (515) were received from those aged 50 and over. The most number of submissions within this age range were received from the 50-54 years age group (94 responses).

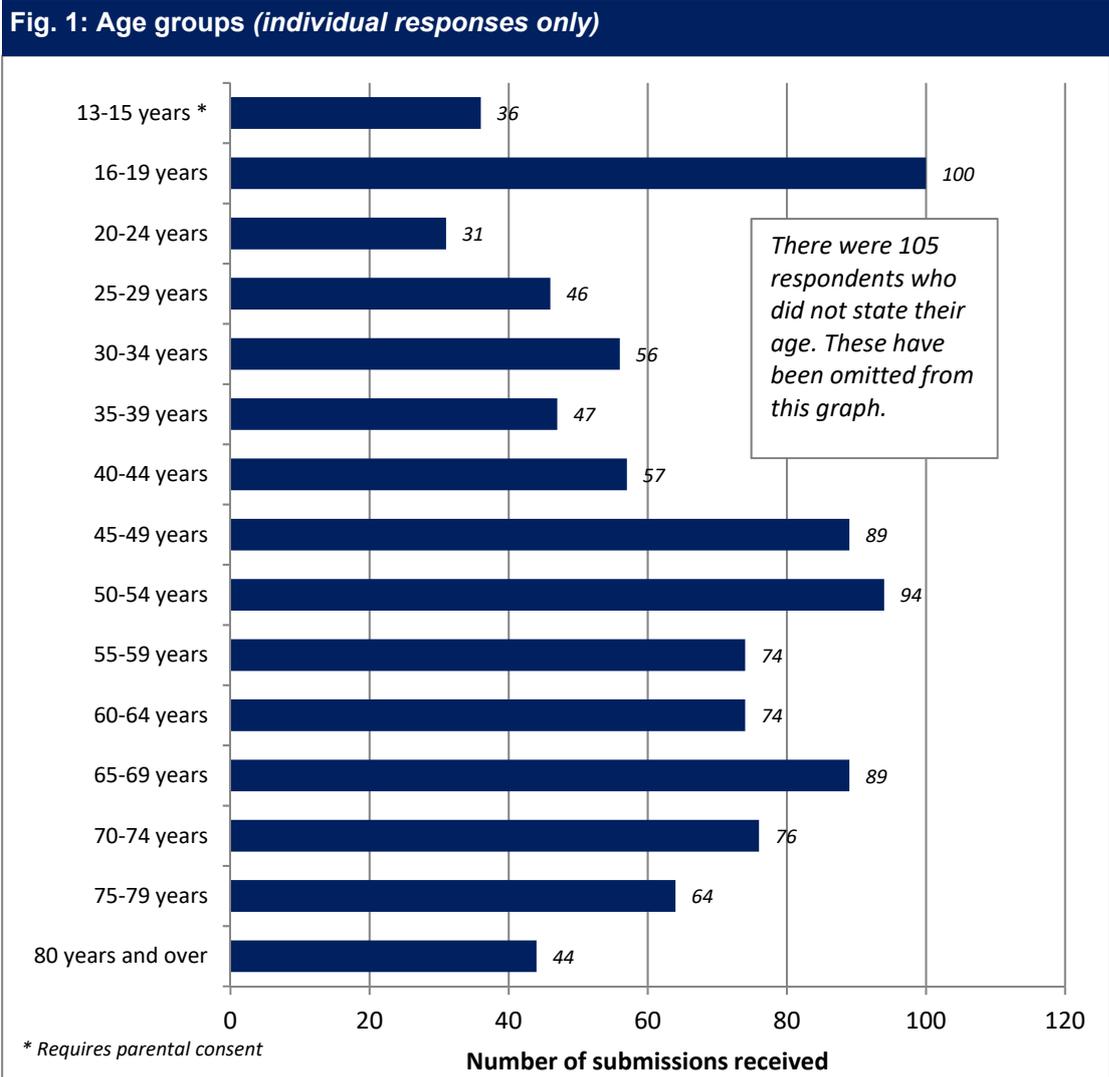
At the close of submissions, there were 167 individual submissions received from those aged under 25.

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 100 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 36 individual submissions made from this age group in your diocese.

13-15 years *	36
16-19 years	100
20-24 years	31
25-29 years	46
30-34 years	56
35-39 years	47
40-44 years	57
45-49 years	89
50-54 years	94
55-59 years	74
60-64 years	74
65-69 years	89
70-74 years	76
75-79 years	64
80 years and over	44
Not stated	105
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>

\* Requires parental consent



## Sex of Respondents

A little over half the number of all individual respondents from your diocese were female (54%), while a further 36 per cent were male. Table 3 shows that there were 388 men and 587 women who made submissions. Thirty-one respondents preferred not to state their sex, while 76 respondents did not answer this question.

<b>Table 3: Sex (individual responses only)</b>	
Female	587
Male	388
Prefer not to say	31
Not stated	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>

## 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. Just under 30 per cent came from other countries, while around 10 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.

<b>Table 4a: Countries of birth (individual responses only)</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Australia	652	60.3
India	49	4.5
Indonesia	11	1.0
Ireland	23	2.1
Italy	12	1.1
Malaysia	30	2.8
Netherlands	6	0.6
Philippines	12	1.1
Singapore	15	1.4
South Africa	20	1.8
Sri Lanka	7	0.6
Trinidad and Tobago	6	0.6
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	57	5.3
Other Countries	72	6.7
Not stated	110	10.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 4b: Country of birth - Summary (individual responses only)</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Australia	652	60.3
Other English-speaking country	111	10.3
Non-English-speaking country	209	19.3
Not stated	110	10.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Table 4c: Mother's country of birth (individual responses only)</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Australia	481	44.5
Other English speaking country	146	13.5
Non-English speaking country	304	28.1
Not stated	151	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* 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.

<b>Table 4d: Father's country of birth (individual responses only)</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Australia	455	42.1
Other English-speaking country	167	15.4
Non-English-speaking country	309	28.6
Not stated	151	14.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* 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 were 21 individuals who identified themselves in this way, representing just under two per cent of all individual respondents.

<b>Table 5: Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (individual responses only)</b>	
Yes	21
No	955
Not stated	106
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>

## Religion of Respondents

The religion question was answered by individual respondents only. Of the total 1,082 individual submissions that were received from your diocese, 905 respondents (84%) were Catholic. Thirty respondents were from other Christian denominations while there were 10 from non-Christian religions. A further 92 respondents did not state their religion and 45 respondents chose the 'no religion' response.

<b>Table 6: Religion (individual responses only)</b>	<b>Person</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Catholic	905	83.6
<b>Other Christian:</b>		
Anglican	13	1.2
Baptist	1	0.1
Churches of Christ	1	0.1
Lutheran	1	0.1
Orthodox	2	0.2
Pentecostal	2	0.2
Presbyterian and Reformed	1	0.1
Salvation Army	1	0.1
Uniting Church	1	0.1
Other Christian	7	0.6
<b>Non Christian:</b>		
Buddhism	5	0.5
Judaism	1	0.1
Other religion	4	0.4
No religion	45	4.2
Not stated	92	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>	<b>100</b>

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 664 respondents indicated that they went to Mass regularly and were involved in other church activities. There were 155 respondents who said they went to Mass and church activities sometimes, while 54 respondents considered themselves Catholic but were not involved or described their participation in other terms. A further 32 respondents described themselves in another way or did not answer the question.

<b>Table 7: Religious description</b> <i>(for those who answered 'Catholic' to previous question)</i>				
	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
I am Catholic and regularly attend Mass and other church activities	371	281	12	664
I am Catholic and go to Mass and church activities sometimes	110	42	3	155
I am Catholic, but I don't practise or get involved in anything	15	7	2	24
I consider myself Catholic but I am not sure what to think about the Catholic faith	17	13	0	30
Other	16	8	2	26
Not stated		2	4	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>905</b>

## GROUP SUBMISSIONS

At the close of the survey on 13 March, there were a total of 519 group submissions made from your diocese. Around 11,542 individuals were represented through these groups. However, 31 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 394 group submissions provided a group name, 125 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 The Apostles of Perpetual Adoration with around 2,000 members. There were also a number of other parish and school groups such as the Our Lady of the Mission Parish, Whitfords with 1,000 participants and Newman College, Perth with 257 members. There were 16 other groups with 100 members or more.

<b>Table 8 : Group submissions from the diocese</b>	
<b>Name of group</b>	<b>Group size</b>
The Apostles of Perpetual Adoration	2,000
Our Lady of the Mission Parish, Whitfords	1,000
Holy Family Catholic Parish	600
Newman College, Perth	257
Sts John and Paul Catholic Parish Willetton	159
Newman College	159
Servite College	150
Our Lady of the Visitation, 34 Santa Gertrudis Drive, Lower Chittering WA 6084	150
Pater Noster/Saint Joseph Pignatelli Parish	150
Iona Presentation College	140
La Salle College	135
Holy Trinity Parish, New Norcia, WA	120
Emmanuel Catholic College	110
North Perth Monastery	100
St Brigid's College	100
Sacred Heart College	100
Our Group is the Catholic Parish of Queens Park/East Cannington	100
Irene McCormack Catholic College	100
St. Denis Church, Joondanna	100
North Perth Monastery Friday Group 4	90

## Age and Sex of Group Members

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

The 50-69 years age group was the largest group represented with 2,594 members. This was followed by the group aged 30-49 years with 2,151 members. There was no age provided for around 393 group members.

<b>Table 9: Estimates of ages of people in group submissions</b> <i>(group responses - for submissions received after 04 November 2018 only)</i>	
Under 20 years	902
20 - 29 years	984
30 - 49 years	2,151
50 - 69 years	2,954
70 and over	1,419
Unknown	393
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,803</b>

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

Of the total 8,958 group members whose sex was reported, 57 per cent (5,149) were female and 43 per cent (3,809) were male.

<b>Table 10: Estimates of sex of people in group submissions</b> <i>(group responses - for submissions received after 04 November 2018 only)</i>	
Female	5,149
Male	3,809
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,958</b>

*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
- Leadership and Church Governance
- Sacraments

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

- Love God, Love Neighbour (Chapter 4)
  - *Greater trust, faith and hope in God (p. 29)*
  - *Greater focus on Jesus Christ (p. 30)*
  - *Remaining faithful to Church teaching (p. 32)*
  - *Care for neighbour (p. 36)*
  - *Greater focus on the Word of God (p. 31)*
  - *Better faith formation (p. 38)*
- 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)*
- Leadership and Church Governance (Chapter 7)
  - *Greater role for women (p. 83)*
  - *New model of Church, diocese, parish (p. 93)*
  - *Greater involvement of the laity (p. 84)*
  - *Ending clericalism (p. 80)*
  - *Greater leadership from bishops (p. 87)*
  - *Greater leadership from priests (p. 88)*
    - *Emphasis on: More formation and support for priests (p. 89)*
- Sacraments (Chapter 6)
  - *Holy Orders – Ending celibacy / allowing priests to marry (p. 66)*
  - *Holy Orders - Ordination of women (p. 69)*
  - *Greater emphasis on prayer and sacraments (p. 64)*

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)*
- *Modernise Church teachings (p. 169)*

## 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.

The world is screaming for tradition in all aspects. People are talking how things use to be good before political correctness came in. I urge the Church to stay traditional. Get rid of fancy colourful contemporary art and music and go back to traditional. At the same time, do more regarding compassion. The divide between rich and poor is killing our communities and we need help. The Church can be the one stable help. I also urge the Church not to have a fake PR but compile an easy to read list of all the great work we do. Social welfare, hospitals, schools, welfare etc. the environmental/social justice left would love the Church if they could see what we do. Instead they criticise us and say we have heaps of money and don't do anything. We need more transparency in what we do. We could be an institution that everyone loves, both right and left if we just had the information for people to witness. And come out more actively with remorse for the child sex abuse and ensure these things never ever happen again. If people could see how I see the Church, we would be loved and would bring so many new individuals to the faith. Let us lead by example and allow others to see the light of Jesus through the Church. Be compassionate and action driven while still being traditional and mystical. I would rather hear a soprano singer than guitars. And I would rather see social services, feeding the poor, etc. rather than Church coffee and cake after Mass. Let's open our hearts, provide love and care at the same time as having 2000 years of traditional churches. I can't believe that beautiful old churches are being shut down and replaced by concrete eye-sores. Get rid of contemporary, rid of the churches that look like public libraries and bring back amazing cathedral-like parishes that lift the mind, heart and soul towards the presence of God. People in my generation all talk about how things in the 90's was best ... had the best music (grunge and 90's Rap). Best sports, best movies, best this and that ... and how today is soulless and corporate. That's how our churches are going ... soulless and corporate. Bring back the grass roots tradition, decor, music, and let the Church be the cornerstone of stability and strength.

God is asking fidelity of his Church—a particular fidelity to Jesus that is met foremost by fulfilling one's Sunday obligation.

I have some thoughts on the preamble of the Mass. After reading Margaret Court's book "Winning Life" I asked myself why such a dedicated Christian would leave the Catholic Church and I thought that our Mass didn't nourish this woman's soul. Margaret was infected by a poor self-image through her mother (who had lived in a household where alcohol was abused (p117 Ch9 "The power of words")). I thought to myself what if the Church in the Mass could spell out how parents and siblings are marginalized by poor leadership in the home and people like Margaret could continue to draw strength from the Eucharist and the Word of God. Having read "The Biology of Belief" by Dr Bruce Lipton; "Dark night of the Soul" and "Care of the Soul" by Thomas Moore I now realize the primacy of our God orchestrated soul. Perhaps a reading from these books on the importance of feeding the soul nourishment by parents in developing children's potential could be inserted before the Penitential Rite (Bruce Lipton says that parents should meditate and pray before they agree to conceive a child). The tone of the reading would be about lifting our children and parents up from the depravity of the world (often influenced by alcohol, gambling, poor choices and drugs) into a positive framework of development. Margaret's mother had no right to infect her with the negative attitudes that she felt but because of a poor self-image and perhaps the failure to believe in His total absolution, she did. The penitential rite would then have a much deeper meaning and set us all on the road to a better life.

God is asking of us: To Listen to self, others and God. To set aside judgement. To be inclusive in language and action. To develop the skills of discernment. To be joy-bringers, not oppressors. To be less driven by what we don't do in our moral codes, but rather by what it is we that we do for God's people. To ask forgiveness. To shun clericalism and misogyny. To feed the poor.

Dear Holy Men and Women of God, thank you for this incredible opportunity for us to speak from our hearts and souls. I have felt and believed for several years now that somehow, we have not focussed enough on the Gifts and Fruit of the Holy Spirit, especially the gift of Reverence and Awe. Our Jewish brothers and sisters hold our Heavenly Father in such great esteem, they do not even dare say His Holy Name. I don't mean us necessarily to go to that extent but I feel very strongly we should make moves in that direction. Firstly, and deeply understood, I believe we must return to using the respectful capital letters for all pronouns related to the Holy Trinity. This may seem small but it's not at all. The way this recognition has been dropped is an insidious and very subtle erosion of respect. Heaven should also have a capital letter. Not only is it a proper noun anyway but it's our acknowledgment and sign of our faith that it is an actual place. The most sacred place. We could also learn a lot from the Melkite Church ... again something we've lost ... When we enter a church, it is a Holy place, filled with the Holy Presence of God. Normal chatter and conversation should of course still be encouraged and welcome but outside the sacred place of worship. I do not mean we revert to a fearful respect any negative sense at all. Reverence and awe can be filled with joy, peace, gentleness and all the fruits of the Holy Spirit, including self-control (the Muslim faith also practices great reverence and I think this is one of the aspects that actually attracts people to that faith). However, our beloved Catholic Church so very rightly holds love as her highest gift and aim. Our love of God, our Father, Lord Jesus, our Friend, Shepherd and Saviour, together with the Holy Spirit, our Lord and Giver of Life must absolutely include immeasurable awe and reverence, which we are very sadly losing. If we can change the editions of our Bible, Missal, Prayer Books and Hymns, we can change them back again. Cost should not be a deterrent. When I wrote about this to Archbishop [ - ], he replied in full agreement and even encouraged me to speak to priests about it. However, the reality is that hardly any priest is going listen to a mere lay woman let alone act on her plea. However, they will certainly listen to their leaders, their Archbishops, Cardinals and Conferences. I sincerely hope and pray you receive this letter in the love and deep concern for our Church with which it is written. God bless you and guide you all. Yours most humbly and sincerely.

Is there nothing more that we, as the Catholic Church, can do for the unborn? Is there no way that we can sit slightly outside of the Australian Foster Care system, in a privately funded organisation and offer to provide a life for the children on their way to be aborted? Can we not create a home environment with quality care for those infants to be saved? Provide an opportunity for loving,

faithful, Catholic families to adopt a child that would otherwise have been slaughtered? Surely there is something we can do. Channels we can explore. Ways to stay within the confines of the legal system, to offer a service that would truly save lives and enrich families. Perhaps even if it were only offered for the first year or two of that child's life and then they could enter the foster system if they were not adopted as an infant? I understand that many expectant mothers who are considering abortion, somehow find themselves unable to 'condemn' their child to a life of foster care or a 'lower' quality of life than they deserve, but surely it is worth attempting to provide this option if it only even saves one life? If the medical costs of pregnancy, birth and child-raising were no longer a concern and there was a prospect of a good life for that child, perhaps a mother would consider sparing its life? Perhaps we could even offer a place to live out her pregnancy if needed. Unfortunately, I am not business minded and have no proposition for how this could be financially viable or legally possible. I just believe there may be something that we could be offering these mothers on top of our prayers. If I could tell every mother walking into an abortion clinic that I would take her child and care for it and love it if only she would see the pregnancy through, I would. I feel as though many families would gladly offer the same, or at least be able to contribute their service or finances to a cause as worthy as this. I believe we need to be thinking outside of the box. The entire world should be offering a service like this. Fighting to keep these babies alive and striving to provide all they need.

The Church has suffered incredibly from the abuse commission's findings. People feel betrayed and disenfranchised because the moral anchor to which they had clung to and trusted was found to be lacking. From the outset, it must be understood that the perpetrators of these crimes are very small in number, yet their actions have undermined the thousands of men and women who have worked in clinics, schools, hospitals, missions and other social services bringing solace and comfort to millions of people. Our first priority should be to reconcile ourselves with those people who have been directly affected and then rebuild the trust and faith of those who have left in disgust. I know that for some, this was the excuse they needed to turn their back on the Church; it was a believable excuse to abandon the faith. But for many, there is an opportunity to restore faith and bring people back to the faith. The second area of concern I have is for those who have been isolated from the Church because of their marital circumstances in terms of divorce. Many couples have been divided due to violence, drug abuse, sexual, physical and emotional violence. Living in the 21st century brings with it difficulties where the Church should be able to be seen as a source of refuge and solace. Marriage is a civil institution that has been made into a sacrament by the Church. Like many rules established by the Church, there is a need to revisit them and see them in the light of modern life. When I was a child, it was a requirement to fast after midnight before taking the Blessed sacrament. This was modified to 3 hours and now is down to 1 hour. Can we apply the same process to our thinking on marriage? Jesus did not condemn, but forgave and told the sinner "not sin any more". Is there anyone who can say that they have not sinned anymore? Denying access to the Eucharist may as well be seen as excommunication as the purpose of the Mass has been taken away.

The same as He always asks—Repent. We have a lot to repent for—decades of bishops failing to teach and protect, poorly formed priests who are set up to fail, and just 10% of all Catholics practising. Plus, our bishops and priests turned their backs on *Humanae Vitae* and taught others to do the same. We are reaping the rewards now. The Church in Australia will very soon be actively persecuted by the State, and no one is ready for this at all. So yeah, I am looking at this, and looking at my own life, and I'm thinking: Repent. Let the message of Christ in ALL its richness—including the unfashionable bits—find a home in you.

Basically, in relation to the Church itself, the most important matter is the Governance of the Church by this I mean that the concept of Sole Corporate excludes the laity from any real and proper decision-making. Second issue that concerns me is the fact that Church refuses to accept the fact that the Holy Spirit speaks to us through many channels—are we open to these channels? This also includes the many other various Christian and non-Christian religions—will they be invited to participate? I do not mean that they should be part of the decision-making process but we should

listen to what they have to say. We are a multicultural society with an open democratic system meaning that there is a diverse opinion.
Back to basic. Relearn the Catechism and make sure that Catholics know what it means to be a Catholic. Priests should learn a lot to make better sermon. Family to encourage vocation.
To be a leading light, a practical example of His love and mercy. A people (Church) who have compassion for everyone regardless of position and circumstances.
What need of Theology if I am loved? If I know peace like a baby, warm, fed and caressed in mothers love. My soul filling up and bathing in the endless moment. What need of Scripture if I can love? If my heart spills over for my brother. If action is assured. Giving out, spending myself for him. What Church will satisfy if I know God? If he lives within me, and I in him. His love beating in my chest and filling my veins. And if you know the same. Brother, if you can hold my hand. I need not. But time has poured through my hands. My body grown into its aches. Love spent, heart torn. My soul lost and reaching. Where are you brother? I walk self-consciously to a seat and wait. For a fleeting moment of Him, I pray. A second in time. To pierce the scars. To fill my wretched, leaky soul. Theology sits down with me, a steadfast companion. My doubt's doubter. Scripture soothes, like a familiar fragrance from along-lost past. Its memorable notes sing of hope and love. But what of our Church? Our Body of Christ? My brother in faith, here you are! I see you. What troubles you brother, here hold my hand.
To love others in a way which reflects the love of Christ—a love that serves others, is patient, kind and unselfish.
I believe God is asking us to build a visible community of love that is the Church in today's world, making "Thy Kingdom Come" a living testament. How is this vision smudged at the moment? Or what things need to happen to obliterate obfuscation so Jesus Light does shine through our Church to the whole world? We worship together on Sundays (and more)—But do we pray together for each other? (Prayers of the Faithful) taking the time to socialize with each other? (Tea after Mass and certain events) look after each other, especially the ones who have no families? (Parish Outreach) take care of our priests? (taking turns to invite priest for lunch) educate each other to deepen the grace of Faith, Hope and Love through scriptural and doctrinal studies? Provide avenues to service Spiritual needs of parishioners, such as encouraging regular sacraments of reconciliation, personal and not group ones; Also, there should be room for sharing questions of faith and sharing testimonies of faith that can be included before and after Mass. I believe God is telling us that unless we look after the parishioners in our own family parish well, there is little light that can come from the parishioners. A priest once said to me: A Church is not just a community, it is a family. Family members don't and can't choose who their family members are, community members do. This is an important point. Too often our attention is do outreach is so stretched that we lose focus to looking after our own family members. If our family members can't receive love from each other, in terms of all the items listed above, we are not looking after each other. Where one feels love in the family, one becomes secure and confident. And the message of God's love living in our lives becomes real. I believe almost all the things I mentioned here are already in place in some parishes. However, the devil's in the details. We don't need to keep doing more. We have to focus, fine-tune and recognize the essential things that the souls in our family need to stay happy and connected. To want and want to do this is love. It is love that necessitates action, prioritization and happiness. This would be different from love that is motivated by humanistic desire to feel good. This stems from a desire to bring justice to God's love for His peoples ... let us do everything we can to not obfuscate His Light, His Love for our families in our Church. People outside our Church will see us as changed people and only then can we be genuine witnesses to Christ our Lord. Amen.
Let women minister to God and His people at the altar.
Recognising that God speaks to us through scripture, the people of Faith, laity and clergy, I conclude that our 'Church' needs to be less 'institutional' and less 'clerical' and much more inclusive of the lay people in its operation. For example, Canon Law already allows for Diocesan Synods involving lay

representatives as well as clergy having their say. Cairns Diocese has regular annual Synod operating and well regarded it is. All Australian Dioceses should be having such Synods.

To be patient. So many recent events could, and have, caused many to leave the Church altogether. Adult children ask parents why they still bother to go. Often, I ask myself the same question. More and more it seems apparent that the edifice complex of the Church: It's former glories; sense of entitlement of the clergy; clergy domination; lack of personal prayer-life, have resulted in priests who see the priesthood as a secure job for life in an institution, built on the Rock of Peter, that would never fail, and whose image had to be defended whatever cost. I feel that we, the laity have been complicit in this and are guilty, thereby of worshipping false gods. The good news is we are taking our power back and can see how naive we were to place our trust in an all-too-human and dysfunctional organisation. I trust that these present upheavals of sexual abuse in the Church worldwide highlighting the many weaknesses of priestly formation will lead to a renaissance of how the Church is structured. The priest, as leader and teacher of the flock, needs to be in discussion with their parishioners, not only about the peripheral organisation of parish affairs but on the content of his weekly sermons at Mass. He would benefit greatly by hearing input from his parishioners on all matters concerning family life, the impact of world events, the challenges of changes in theological thinking. Many sermons are intellectual head-trips. We need a priest who meets with his parishioners on a weekly basis to receive input from them about what is important to them. Yes. We are gifted with discernment and wisdom. Yes, we are spiritually mature and able to have a theological discussion. All of us have a wealth of experience upon which to draw. Some clergy appear to be lonely. Who is there to guide them once they are ordained? More openness to parishioners and less hierarchical thinking by the priest Leads to a healthy community which knows it is being listened to.

To rebuild the Church by using the Youth of the Church and the Church Community. To ensure the continuation of the Church by listening to the youth and the Church community. By making the Church relevant to the youth and Church community. By finding out what they want and what they need from the Church. By developing and encouraging the youth and their activities within the Church. By only using the older Church members as guides and mentors. By encouraging the older Church members to allow, permit, and encourage youthful members. By treating the young men and women as equals, giving them equal voice. By preparing the community to take greater responsibility for the Church as the numbers of clergy diminish. By not seeing the diminishing numbers of clergy as detrimental to the Church but as an evolutionary process. By giving back to the people the ability to make their faith shine, without the smothering, or heaviness of the clergy. By bringing joy back into the Church.

We live in testing times. Challenges facing our 21st Century world, and individual human beings across all age groups, are becoming more far reaching and complex as time goes on. It is so important in these times then to remember, and live the need to respect the dignity of each and every human person. God wants us to meet people exactly where they are; in whatever stage of life and context and give them the respect and love they deserve. The theme is "Listen to what the Spirit is saying" and really listening to each other, to needs, desires, and aspirations is something we can all do, and hopefully act upon. It's not hard to listen, and we don't always need to provide answers. Just listening to someone is providing reassurance and support. We need to ramp up our confidence in proclaiming Jesus. We need to keep Jesus front and centre in our lives; and live by his life and example in all our dealings with each other. There is no better blueprint than Jesus' life and values; he is the ultimate role model. As Catholics we must be prepared to give witness to these gospel values at all times. I feel that this is something that is being watered down somewhat in our Catholic schools. In my role, I often hear about Catholic schools where being a profitable, ongoing business is first and foremost, and the needs of individuals are second. I hear of bullying going on, on staff, and amongst the students, even in the parent communities. I am extremely saddened when I hear of this kind of bullying, in school communities where I have worked, schools that have long and rich traditions, charisms and history. Placing Gospel values front and centre, reinforcing our Catholic

identity surely would go some way towards addressing and treating some of these issues. I believe that God is asking us to share and promote the good stories, the good stuff that is happening in our Church. Yes, the abuse of children has been abominable and sickening. Every day we are hearing more and more, it seems to be never ending. However, there are also uplifting, hope-filled examples of the great things, the witness that has been given and continues to be given, by individuals associated with our Church. God wants us to share these stories, the world needs to hear the good stuff. The individuals who have devoted their lives for social justice. The individuals who have married, raised families, worked in careers and have still found time to help those in need. The ongoing work of the Catholic organisations in Australia, and around the world. Initiatives in schools, initiatives in parishes. Let's get these living examples of love, witness and of God is asking of us in Australia out there, and share this good news!

To be firm and straight about Catholic values: Importance of sacraments, marriage, homosexuality (it is sin), more talk about sin during the Mass, prepared sermons from priests. Is the Church ...

Before we even think of moving on, I believe that the Church has to foremost upfront acknowledge their failings, particularly with cover up of priests and religious. I think it's has been only lip service to this point and MUST be addressed immediately. (Take as an example trying to HIDE Archbishop Pell in Rome.).

God is wanting us to show Respect to him and his Creations. By showing our Respect, others will respect us and assist us in doing good works in his name. If we show Disrespect, then the young will leave the Church and Donations to good organisations like Caritas will be reduced.

I think that God is asking us (as a Church) to show reasoned Leadership. So far, the leadership shown is causing the Church to disintegrate. The bishops publicly falling on their swords about the Child Abuse Royal Commission, has left the Church open to Media attack and hence the loss of many people attending Church. We need Leadership, so what is left of the grass roots, are proud to rally around the Church—not embarrassed to say "I'm a Catholic". It appears that the Managers of the Church (deliberately didn't use the term "Leaders" because they aren't showing leadership) have lost their way and are hoping the "People" can give them clues of where to go. At the Plenary Discussion I attended tonight, the outcomes from the floor fell into three groups. They were:

\* There should be more Lay Persons involvement in the Church—but I'm not going to volunteer (someone needs to Greet me at Church, someone needs to arrange more lay involvement like Extraordinary Ministers etc).

\*The Church needs to become more radical in having Women priests, Approve Contraception, Embrace the Alternative Sex Culture of Gay and Lesbians, etc. and Marriage there off.

\*Embrace the Teaching of the Church and educate the laity in them that have held it in good stead for the last 2000 years.

The first two items above—to me are the same, I think they are a good idea, even if they drive down Church Attendances. Need a "Business Case" done to prove that these changes would increase numbers rather than close up the Church. The priesthood needs to be trained to gain respect of the Public in general. We seem to have lost the old Preachers, who could negotiate like Archbishop Clune, who dealt with Lloyd George and the Irish Issues and had all sorts of people attend his Funeral (I would be interested to see the calibre of Pall Bearers that our current Australian Church leaders have when they are called to receive the Crown that they deserve). Please go back to the First Plenary Council outcomes in:—PASTORAL LETTER of The Archbishops and bishops of Australia, In Plenary Council Assembled, To The Clergy and Laity of Their Charge 1886 A quote that stands out for me is "Agencies for the Salvation of Souls" 'It is our duty to remind the clergy that, among the many agencies which God and his Church place in their hands, for a successful apostleship in their parishes, three principally stand forth. And of these, the first, in many senses is the example of the clergyman's own life. If the priest is known to be earnest in saving his own soul, loving God and God's interests, thoroughly temperate in his habits, free from all suspicion of personal avarice, his congregation cannot help belong to him and to God.'

<p>To focus on asking for forgiveness for the wrongs done by members the Catholic Church in the past. I believe God is asking us to be humble and search for a better way to reconnect with youth who are the future so they can be engaged and inspired to be part of the Church. I believe God wants us to act and think differently than we have done in the past and to embrace change.</p>
<p>To love everyone equally, no matter what race, or sexual orientation.</p>
<p>To stop living in a male-dominated world, to accept everyone for who they are in every aspect, including; gender, race, and sexuality. To stop judging people, and to be more inclusive, as well as be more inclusive towards people with family issues, as in abuse, or separation, and divorce.</p>
<p>I believe God would be wanting a more open, transparent, inclusive and less judgemental Church in Australia; a Church that welcomes everyone with love and compassion, a Church less bogged down with dogma and doctrine. It may now be time to examine whether the "priestly" or "religious class" is appropriate for our age. Even the Holy Father has commented on whether their role as "servants" of the Church has been lost.</p>
<p>Good Morning/Afternoon, I'm just wanting to re-visit my question. I don't have a parish to belong to, or to CALL HOME. My last two or three attempts to engage with a parish have on each occasion been met with REJECTION. MY QUESTION IS, WITH THE DOWNTURN IN ATTENDANCE AT SUNDAY MASS, AND THE RISE IN RELIGIOUS AND SECTARIAN ABUSE, IS IT POSSIBLE, IN THIS 21st CENTURY, THAT A DEDICATED CATHOLIC, BAPTISED AND GROWN UP IN THE CHURCH, COULD ACTUALLY BE PREVENTED FROM ATTENDING SUNDAY MASS, OR FROM BEING ACTIVE IN THE VARIOUS CHURCH ACTIVITIES??? So much so that one CATHOLIC PRIEST from [ - ] in [ - ], actually said to me, WHY DON'T I GO TO A MUSLIM CHURCH? And parishioners HAVE ACTUALLY STOOD UP TO ME AND SAID I'M SORRY YOU CAN'T COME IN! Is this FAIR, and in this day and age, CAN THIS ACTUALLY HAPPEN? IS THIS ACTUALLY ALLOWED? THANK YOU for reading my email. Sincerely, [ - ] [ - ].</p>
<p>To attend Mass more often, daily if possible. To pray more, especially in eucharistic adoration. To evangelize to others. To stay connected with other Catholics.</p>
<p>God is calling us to be fervent in our traditions, and solidly Catholic. The Church has been around for 2000 years, and it is sad to see it has been slowly unravelling and becoming more and more liberal since the 1960's. The Church is in the world, not of it, and should behave accordingly. She does not exist to win a popularity contest. Sacraments are being abused every day (people marrying in the Church with no intention of honouring the vow of openness to life; people baptising their children just so they can attend a Catholic school, countless Catholics receiving communion when they are not in a state of grace; or not even believing in the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, etc.). A return to reverence in the liturgy, followed by opportunity for fellowship after Mass would help a great deal. Mass is not meant to be entertaining, and if people attend church for 'fun' community experiences, then that can (and should) exist outside of the Mass (e.g.: morning tea after Mass). A return to reverence could include: sacred music, Novus ordo ad Orientem, reconciliation offered before each Mass, communion rails for people to kneel at Holy Communion, less extraordinary ministers, a return to people receiving communion on the tongue.</p>
<p>To follow the example of Jesus in accepting people. Since 13th Century, Church has taught that valid sacramental marriages cannot be dissolved. Catholics who divorce and remarry without an annulment are judged guilty of adultery and excluded from receiving the Eucharist. This barrier to participating as members of the faithful should be removed.</p>
<p>We Must put an end to the suffering of refugees on Manus and Nauru. We will be rightly condemned by our inaction as regards their inhumane treatment. Where there is a will there is a way—surely, we can come up with a solution, if it requires money, so be it—we can sponsor each and every one of these unfortunate people. They are our responsibility, they are in our care (I use the word lightly).</p>
<p>To reform the Church so that we witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. A new understanding and practice of priesthood; ensure education of the laity in the teachings of Vat. II, which will require restructuring of parishes. I hope for new seminary structure where seminarians live with laity in family groups which could include training of parish leadership persons. In this way, we would feel</p>

like a family where loving belonging is paramount and Christian witness would flourish. Christ's unconditional love and forgiveness is practised instead of sin and punishment. I am convinced that the Gospel must be preached in evolutionary language that is speedily becoming current in society today so there is no division between Church and all creation. We cannot quickly enough grasp the new understanding of Incarnation in order to be open to what the "Spirit is saying to the Churches today". The laity should participate in choice of persons, women and men in the choice of seminarians and election of bishops. Wherever we recognise that laws, practices and regulations are clearly seen to be of human origin, they need to be carefully scrutinised and adjusted to suit the times and places we live in particularly matters of exclusion. We are all one in Christ whether we know it or not.

That we be more caring, more forgiving, more understanding in the light of the Word—of Jesus's life.

For Australian Catholic laity to find maturity and self-awareness as Church which leads to a thorough process of renewal, from bottom to top, according to the Gospel and by means of the establishment of ongoing dialogue both within the Australian Church and in the public encounter with fellow Australians.

To work and pray together to make the Catholic Church more relevant and inclusive for today's youth. So many young people are lost and isolated for numerous reasons, but do not turn to God and his Church(es) for comfort and support. Why? "Hypocrisy" (across the board) is the word I hear most often when discussing the Catholic Church with Catholics, young and old, who no longer practise their religion. I was also surprised at the vehemence with which the female members of our recent discussion group expressed their sorrow and anger at the lack of female inclusion in the governance and operation of the Catholic Church. My generation did not expect females to become members of the clergy, but there is no doubt that with societal changes this is a huge issue for some. So many rules, attitudes, processes need to be examined and updated by the appropriate authorities within the Church, and parish priests need to be encouraged and allowed more freedom to be compassionate, inclusive and tolerant of those people who may have for so long been considered "outsiders". My generation saw the break-up of marriages, the horrendous abuse of female health and well-being, poverty and even starvation brought about by the refusal of the Church to allow birth control. Why would intelligent, liberated, healthy young people accept that situation today? From my experience, they do not and will not. Do we really believe an all-loving God would shun those with gender issues; those who are divorced or single parents; those who are of a different colour, race or even creed; those who dare to question the establishment, or those with addictive personalities? The Church needs to return to being "Christlike". Christ lived to provide the example, and died for love of us ... all of us.

I believe God is asking us to be humble and reflect deeply on our situation as Church at this time of crises especially on the effect of sexual abuse on all our members. How will it be possible to reach out to so many who are hurting especially the many who have lost faith in the Institutional Church and no longer attend the sacraments thus preventing the faith being passed on to their children. I believe God is asking us to relook at the role of women in the Church as Pope Francis has said assigning a certain number of women to leadership positions is "simply functionalism" I believe God is asking us to reconsider the third Rite of Reconciliation as my experience has shown that many people have shared how they do not attend anymore as they have lost trust in the Church and perhaps the third Rite would certainly be a tremendous way to help members of the Church return and appreciate the gift of the sacrament. I believe this is a wonderful opportunity in Australia to listen to the Youth who have been at the Synod in Rome and to encourage them whenever we have an opportunity. I believe it is important to have hope and continue to trust in the power of the Holy Spirit and to pray for all the preparations by so many who have been animated to lead the various groups in our country.

Australia—listen to all those who have experienced personal pain at the hand of others.

Australia—love your neighbours inside and outside the country.

Australia—uphold your Christian based laws, your democracy, your multicultural lifestyles and your justice for all.

I think God is asking us to carefully consider how we engage the tradition of the Church. The faith is received in every generation, not generated by us in the present. We see in the West particularly the rise in interest in more traditional doctrinal formulations and forms of worship amongst young people. I think that this can be the result of myriad factors—not least of which is the rising uncertainty in their lives: their parents are often not married or divorced, political instability the world over is on the rise, and not even their gender is considered stable anymore. The turn towards tradition also seems to me to be a reaction against a kind of banal liturgical experience that many have in Catholic primary and secondary school settings, as well as tepid (at best) presentations of the faith. The purely immanent direction of liturgical action and music leaves little room for an experience of transcendence—and the turn to tradition is usually the result of an experience of otherness that is felt in contexts such as an extraordinary form Mass. On top of this, there is also a more adequate understanding in attending the Extraordinary form of the Mass that the efficacy of the prayer is not contingent on my own personal feelings at the time, which is a source of great hope for people who want to worship, but are not always in an intellectual or emotive space where they can participate in more overt forms of charismatic or other liturgical expressions. Further, within more traditional circles, there is a tendency to read literature concerning prayer, asceticism and the moral life which is a lot more 'cut-and-dry' than what is found elsewhere (this is not always healthy, but it has been my experience). I think that the Church needs to prayerfully consider how it engages the tradition, as it seems to me that if more traditional forms of engagement with the faith continue to be viewed with suspicion, and those who engage with such traditional forms are ostracised then we do violence to the Body of Christ, disregarding significant elements of the Communion of Saints, as well as those who legitimately find solace in more liturgical forms of spirituality.

To love, to serve, to be compassionate, to love one another as God loved us. To innovate and modernise, to allow more marginalised groups to enter. To open the doors and to break down the hierarchical and patriarchal systems in place.

Transparency in the Church, the ability for the lay people to engage with the priests in a common way. Priests are often seen as remote or separate from the Church. We are one Church and we are one human family. The Church needs to be accepting of all people, refugees, those of different views, those with different spiritual approaches. If we are the Church for all people we must be accepting of all people.

For the Church to flourish into the future in Australia, and also the world, I believe the most important change is the need for women to have as equal a representation as men in all areas:—  
e.g.

- 1) all decision-making processes, in terms of Church doctrine;
- 2) younger women in leadership roles should be consulted to get their views;
- 3) I have 2 daughters and their view is that they should not be dictated to as to what they should do by a bunch of generally older men;
- 4) the readings in Church should be amended to reflect modern thinking and not the old fashioned words that are offensive to women.

In a recent reading, St Paul to the Ephesians, "So is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything". My daughter who was a reader in a parish in America when this reading was scheduled told me that they did not read this part of the reading. She also said that if it had been included she would not have read it. This is an example of why women consider that the Church needs to change its attitude to make women more inclusive in setting their policies. The second point that is most relevant is that the Church must become relevant for younger people. You only have to look at attendances at many Masses on Sundays to see that most people attending are over 50. The next important point is that the Church must set up a relevant management structure, similar to any modern business, they should apply best practice and priests must be accountable to their superior. The final point I wish to make is that the Church

<p>should be more vocal in talking about the plight of refugees. The Church leaders in this country should continually make strong representations until the plight of refugees is resolved.</p>
<p>That the spirituality be based around laity and clergy being on Christ's mission in the world. Laity to be 'leaven in the world', evangelizing in ordinary situations such as our family, work, local community. Spirituality and growth/depth in a mature faith be encouraged. Eradicate the language that keeps the faithful in an adolescent-clergy relationship. i.e. 'shoulds' and 'oughts' need to be translated to 'coulds' and 'need to'. Teaching various prayer methods would help the laity to see the value of meditation, lectio divina, etc. as well as the rosary. There is value in getting the people in a parish to 'know' each other rather than have this individual faith that is not shared. Small group sharing as in Christian Life Community would help nourish and help people to share their faith life, and work towards mission in the world. At parish level the structure of parish councils seem to be 'business oriented' could operate on discernment and a process similar to this plenary council, but at the parish level. Synodality is almost unknown in our parish, where Father's word contains absolute power. Power needs to be shared with clergy and laity talking about their assumptions and expectations to open up honestly. This would engender hope rather than fear.</p>
<p>Asking for Catholics to be responsible for keeping informed to be able to discuss Catholic teachings and beliefs in a peaceful respectful manner bearing witness to Christ's message.</p>
<p>Be inclusive and welcoming. Make effort to make it easy for non-regular people to come to Mass, be it people with disability, people of all ages, people of different language or cultural background, etc. One practical way that this could be done is by providing PowerPoint presentation on every Mass. This would help people who are deaf/hard of hearing, people whose English is not their first language, and also people who are not regular parishioners (and therefore do not know the words to the songs/prayers and do not know the expected responses to what the priest or readers say). If they are left to sit or stand there for an hour with no clue to what's going on, would you blame them for not coming back? Currently I think Masses are only friendly to regular parishioners and nobody else. That needs to change.</p>
<p>We think God is asking us to deepen our knowledge and use of Scripture. We have experienced the value of Scripture study and have seen what it can do in people's lives, inviting them into a deeper relationship with the humanity of Jesus and inviting them and leading them to fall in love with Jesus. We need more than an academic presentation. We are aware that the exposure to the Scriptures for many people is limited to Sunday Mass. Therefore, the homily is so important in breaking open the Scriptures. We suggest that very often a lay person is not only more qualified than the priest, but also, their lived experience is closer to that of the Congregation. For this reason, a sharing of the Scripture by a lay person, not an academic one, would be more helpful in inviting the people into a relationship with Jesus in the Scriptures. The Scriptures will then be opened to all. Apart from the Liturgy, there needs to be opportunities for the ordinary people to join in Scripture groups where they can share their own insights in a prayerful way and listen to each other. The parish needs to provide some programmes for the people and encourage them to participate. This group needs to develop trust in one another in order to share the Scriptures at depth. Sometimes, already existing groups such as Vincent de Paul, Legion of Mary, Parish Councils, can be invited to introduce an extended time of Scripture study into their meetings. In one diocese, a gifted Scripture Scholar was invited to give the homily over a series of Sundays in each of the parishes. This had a wonderful effect on the faith life of the people. As people get to know Jesus more and more deeply and love him more deeply, the Church will be transformed.</p>
<p>Strengthen the experience of community in each parish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Listen to the Holy Spirit and be guided by the Spirit.</li><li>- Be more aware of other people and to share more love, i.e. being aware of others' needs, being selfless.</li><li>- Being compassionate towards the marginalised.</li><li>- Find ways of making the Church attractive to young people.</li></ul>

<p>How can the Catholic Church be more inclusive and encourage those who have turned away to return? Inclusive in the sense of welcoming LGBTIQ, divorced, unbaptised, people of other religions and beliefs into its community. Welcoming lapsed Catholics and Catholics who have questioned the Church's rules and rigidity back into its folds.</p>
<p>Inclusiveness in all its elements e.g. marriage, divorcees; gender; More faith formation; To hear and respond to the disillusioned and alienated Catholics; To reach out to people outside the Church not attending; Include women as equal leaders and participants in the Church of the 21st century, More women in Leadership roles within the Church; To be much more practical of the suffering (poverty, hunger, mental illness, victims of broken homes, orphans and widows; let nuns be more involved and recognized and ordained; To listen and embrace youth and include them in friendly non-judgmental surroundings; To share good news stories through homilies and testimonies not just from priests but from the lay community; To take faith outside the Church; To look at all levels of Catholic Education e.g. choices of employment; To ensure the Spirit of Jesus is alive and active in local communities; Justice; To learn from Jesus to be a humble Church esp. Leaders—reform Leadership; To re-align our direction towards personal transformation, experience of God and relationships and away from doctrine—from Lead to Learn; To remind ourselves and the Church of who God is.</p>
<p>“Love one another as I have loved you”. Make the Church community more welcoming for families and individuals.</p>
<p>To help those people less fortunate than us.</p>
<p>My comment is about how the Catholic Church is teaching our faith to our children in Catholic schools. My son has attended a Catholic college and all he has learnt is theology and the traditions of the faith. His comment was that he was glad that he already had faith otherwise learning the course in school would have put him off the whole aspect of the Catholic faith. I was deeply saddened about this. There was never anytime where the students studied scripture from the Bible or were given guidelines as to how to really seek a personal relationship with Jesus. I sent him to a Catholic school to encourage this but have been very disappointed.</p>
<p>To think about our lives, what is our priority, how do we become a more spiritual people? Are we too materialistic? In our busy lives, how do we fit God in? We need to look at our generosity too, how do we help others less fortunate? Prayer. I believe God requires us to pray and attend Mass.</p>
<p>God, I think, might be asking for a bigger number of people to work through from all cultures, tribes, nations, beliefs, religions, regions, etc. in bringing God to the world. Along the lines of Pope Paul VI's encyclical where there are more lay people involved in ministry and faith development and sharing. A recognition of existing structures in society and an infilling by Catholics in all parts of the existing structures in society. The document by Dr Peter Tannock addresses many issues and I agree with his recommendations. I would like to see a discussion group of all ages formed to discuss matters of religion e.g. Creationist vs. evolution question, married priests, women priests, liturgy, devotions e.g., Rosary, catechists, school principals and teachers being deacons in order to baptise, confirm and teach religion. Clericalism needs addressing. The greater role of parents in forming their children's future needs recognition, especially when parents are faithful for a lifetime to their role as parents. The liturgy could change to include encyclical teachings and give practical ways of achieving these encyclical teachings with group sharing and meetings at the parish and group levels... Deacons could come from laymen and women from parishes. Lay communities such as the Disciples of Jesus already exist that could continue to gather in the parishes providing a base for youth and primary and secondary schools in which parents find mutual support and friendship. The Centre for Faith Enrichment is a wonderful opportunity to expand one's knowledge and find like-minded people on the same journey.</p>
<p>God is asking us to discern a way of bringing our children and families back to the Church and to strengthen our faith practice.</p>
<p>To love God and to love each other. The waters have become muddied over the years, we have complicated things by worrying about trying to please others and have lost sight of what is truly</p>

<p>important. Faith Education needs to be front and centre along with inclusivity and acceptance of all. Church is community, we need to get back to that where we can nurture and support each other as we grow in faith together.</p>
<p>Special prayer in Church that hurt Aboriginal people forgive the person or persons involved; Special prayer and Masses in the parish that the hurt sexual abuse peoples will be able to forgive the Church and learn to love; To be loyal to God, to pray more; To pray for current happenings in Australia and the world in the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass; To put Jesus as central to our faith—get to know Jesus and His way; To honour the Christ in each other; To read and learn about the Bible and Dogmas; To be a listening Church leading to action amongst homeless and starving; To align ourselves and commit to a cause for justice (ongoing!); For the education of children in school—change to be taught about love for Jesus; To offer many different ways of faith formation (this is happening in some places but not all over Australia); To offer "conferences" not just for the learned; To have regular opportunities for lay people to gather Australia wide for faith educational purposes; To ensure priests and seminarians are educated on female spirituality; To encourage our priests to lighten their load; To use the genius of female thought; To explore the notion of what it is to be a Christian in today's world.</p>
<p>The right to life in regards to mercy killing; The right to follow religious teachings of Jesus; To take the Church back to its origins; For the people to be given a bigger voice to the Church running; To care for all people in our country no matter what their religion is or belief; For ministries to be extended to married men and women; We need a structural reform of the Church; For the laity to have a VOTE at the Plenary Council; For the laity to be involved in governance and decision-making; From Patriarchal to Inclusive; For the clergy to concentrate on what they were ordained for; For Celibacy to be optional; For Clericalism to be diminished; parishes administration to be by laity.</p>
<p>To review all Catholic Church practices to see how they can be changed to help the Church, not dogmas; For the laity to have more input in Liturgical celebrations; More involvement of women in the liturgical celebrations and in decision-making; the Church should be more of a missionary Church in our own Australian society not overseas; Need home Masses; For priests to be married; To change the religious education system; More adult faith education; To amalgamate parishes because of the decline in attendance so priests can help each other e.g. one can be missionary in doing home Masses; For the Church to be more ecumenical to combine with other Christian Churches; For more prayer in the Church e.g. Prayer sessions before Mass; For bishops to have advisory group of Lay people both male and female with authority in administration; God wants to see full unity amongst the laity and priests; For the priests to be accountable to their parishes; The future of the Catholic Church is in little groups—small communities.</p>
<p>To become in reality and not just in theory the People of God. To challenge clericalism amongst both the clergy and the laity. To stop the scapegoating and exclusion of those who hold positions contrary to received Catholic doctrine.</p>
<p>Put Jesus Christ as the centre of our lives. Through Him, with Him and in Him. Families to focus on Christ. Participate and pray more in Prayer groups. Mass to be more prayerful with reverence in realisation of God's presence. Spend time for prayer at Mass after receiving Holy Communion. Our Church is our home for our congregation. Volunteers to help clean, get involved and to be welcoming. Being Faithful to the Liturgy. It is time that God is calling each one of us to respond to his call to live his word and to do our best to please him. Actively support our parish in the best way we can to build up a united community. To listen, learn and work together in unity and utilise the gifts he has blessed us with, towards a positive approach to care for all those who are lonely and sick and contribute some of our time by lending a helping hand in our parish when requested. Making an effort, greeting visitors and new comers. To actively get involved in groups to make suggestions to find solutions bring our youth to church. Parish priest to emphasise to the students the importance of attending one of the weekend Masses. Help guide and direct them back to Christ especially those we meet expressing their concerns in their lives by giving moral support. Engage with the Spiritual energy of the ethnic communities in the parish. Respect, value and support the laity involved in the</p>

<p>mission of the parish. Recognition and support of women in ministry. Removal of exclusions (e.g. inclusion of women in the ordained ministry). Collaboration between parish priest and parish. To become a united community with all voices of parish heard with respect. To be accepting of all God's Children irrespective of Gender, race, culture, etc. To understanding plight of others. Transparency and clarity in parish structure. Involvement of women. To be more involved in Liturgy including all groups, gender, cultural, religious in joint worship. Trust God and step out in faith!</p>
<p>To spread love, peace and sharing to attain happiness and providence for all.</p>
<p>The Question of Married priests. Priests to have a choice. How do other religions do this? May need to have more time (priests). History in Catholic Church of married priests already? Option for diocesan priests to marry.</p>
<p>GOD wants us to use our involvements in the Church to counter the materialistic forces which are trying to eliminate religion from peoples' (our) daily lives. We need to spread the word of God to the broader community. Points to support the above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*To have a—Spirit of otherness, sharing, less self, less me.</li> <li>* To—have/encourage—less material things, more of spirituality time.</li> <li>* To encourage—gift of prayers, expression of kind thoughts, have consideration for others.</li> <li>* Showing respect for one another and be less judgemental. Need to translate the above into action. (Both Clergy and Community). Having dialogue is most important.</li> </ul>
<p>To end celibacy and let priests be married.</p>
<p>I believe God is asking us to show respect to one another, to establish trust and most of all to show or learn what love is. I think He would be asking us to be tolerant and patient.</p>
<p>Question One</p> <p>To practise what we preach and be humble. To be a seed. To be relevant. To help people discover their purpose and meaning. 'God is asking us to be the best we can to help those around us, to pray for others'. Care for our mental health. To call to this deeper in our relationship with God (personal conversion). Supporting families. Mercy, honesty and transparency in what we do. Care, Respect, Understanding Security—economic and societal. Strengthening bonds. Rebuilding communities. Ensure priests and religious leaders are and will be honest as well as disclose their involvement in sexual abuse, and also to help heal broken hearts. Having priests and religious more involved in Catholic schools.</p>
<p>I just want to say that I am sick and tired of being called a man, a brother, a son, etc. in everything to do with my Catholic faith. I am woman and I'm happy being one—as I'm sure God is ('male and female he created them'). How would the bishops and priest, and other men in the Church like being called, women, sisters and daughters, etc. as a norm? It's now about 50 years or so since inclusive language became the norm in our society. There is nothing elevated or even quaintly archaic about it as there is with 'thou' and 'thine'. It is simply misplaced and given the marginal place of women around the world, contributing to their invisibility and the injustices they suffer. If people don't complain as loudly as they may have done 2 or 3 decades ago, it is because they expect the Church to get the basics wrong, and not to change: meanwhile they don't care and they make up their own mind. These are essentially the same sort of reasons that many of my friends and family have given for not participating in the PC. Surely disinterest is worse than opposition.</p>
<p>The Pope has already pointed the way: The ecclesial body, the body of Christ, should fast and pray in repentance for the sins of the Church. Only a repentant Church can expect the full blessings of God on any endeavour. From my conversations with fellow Catholics, it is very clear that most have a weak understanding of The Body of Christ. They are willing to pray for the victims of abuse and even for the perpetrators, but are shocked to think that we should stand shoulder to shoulder with the perpetrators, confess our sin and repent of it. When one person prays, the Church prays. When one person sins, the Church sins. We cannot distance ourselves from each other. We are all one in Christ.</p>
<p>Living our values and seeing dignity and God in each and every person.</p>
<p>God is saying we should reimagine the Church as a reflection of the community, to be more inclusive, less judgemental, show meaningful leadership, and to be more forgiving and flexible.</p>

<p>We need to strengthen our families enabling all generations to feel valued, be able to contribute meaningfully and express their faith in tangible ways.</p>
<p>A return to a strong faith in the Catholic Church.</p>
<p>For individuals and their communities to shift their focus and not get caught up in the media with challenging matter such as marriage equality and related issues, sexual abuse within the Church as well as other controversial topics relating to the Church. The way the information is presented will always be biased even when presented by the Church and it tends to turn people away. I believe we need to help priests and other key figures in the Church teach people practical ways of following God in their everyday life, the basics of love, kindness, respect, etc.</p>
<p>1. Need to keep hope alive. 2. Lots to celebrate. Need more good news from Church. What is God asking of us in our classrooms. Do our RE guidelines reflect this? Are we making connections with our children? 3. Many of students in our schools are not of the faith, what is God asking of us for those students ...? How do we bring the Church to the students ... a Church people want to belong to? 4. How do other curriculum areas support the God stuff in Catholic schools? Question of resourcing schools? 5. Inter-faith dialogue. 6. Include more people in the margins of society who have felt dislocated and isolated from the Church. 7. Role of women in the Church. 8. Inclusion and lack of community now in parishes. 9. Revitalise RE curriculum. 10. How to create greater engagement with parish and school. 11. Roles of leadership in parish ... outreach. 12. Making Mass more relatable to young people. 13. Knowing God as love. 14. Faith in action ... how does it play out in society? 15. Back to being a humble Church ... size does not matter. Who we are does. 16. Speaking out on issues ... where is the voice of the Church? 17. A call to action ... the Church needs to be seen as putting their faith into action. 18. Disparity of the sexes. 19. Deacons and Deaconesses.</p>
<p>Restructure of organisation, laity involved in Church governance and decision-making, parish administration by laity, re-evaluate priesthood and seminary, training laity to have vote at the plenary council leadership, need to possess necessary skills required, why youth are rejecting the Church, women and their role in Church, bringing all people back to the Church, support aged and disabled, homelessness, mental health, address abuse from past, peace and harmony needed in world, encourage productivity in politics, reach out to other Christians and religious entities.</p>
<p>To go back to basics, to the heart of Christianity—CHRIST; To release back to God what is His; To be guided by the thought of "What would Jesus do?"; God is asking what we can do to keep Him relevant in today's changing society; To focus on the Holy Spirit; To share good stories publicly—we are too quiet out there in society, we need to publicize it all; We need more courses that are less Catholic and more Christian for e.g. ALPHA; Programs like Alpha are good for the Church; For the Holy Spirit to be active in people's lives.</p>
<p>I firmly believe that a priest answering his calling should have the option available to him to marry and have a family; That women be allowed to take Mass; For a proactive strategic feedback dialogue between leadership and church attendees—to be an ongoing process, not just now for the Plenary Council; To extend the Year of Youth to the Decade of youth; To be united with all religions and races with forgiveness, friendship and love; To be accessible and available—a safe and welcoming space for people to connect and experience God in ACTION; To encourage everyone to participate in singing—spread the Holy word—have a choir at the altar; To be appealing to ALL ages, bringing younger generation in and involved to continue growing (music can be a conduit); To be adaptable while still keeping the essence and truth; To simplify, using Jesus as an example; For the Church to get behind and be outspoken supporters of advertisement of violence against women and children, and other issues in the media; The Church needs to PUBLICIZE the work that the Church does.</p>
<p>Major emphasis on education on WHAT the Church teaches so the laity should be able to give a coherent account of their faith to enquirers and schools should be fully integrated into the life of the parish; Catholic schools to help students to encounter the Holy Spirit supernaturally not just in theory; We should start with the children in primary schools to have retreats and Stations of the Cross, etc.; Catholic lifestyle should be distinguished from secular to an observer; God is asking His people to call out to Him through prayer; For bishops to discern what the people of Australia are</p>

saying and what God wants and act with love and act now; Homilies should be based on everyday life; It is better if parishes are small with expenses shared with neighbouring parishes as necessary; To have a Church which is more pastoral rather than administrative; To have a Church more open, less rules and inclusive to all.

Priests should be able to say Mass, give the sacraments and do parish visitations and leave parishioners to run the parish; All priests and all religious to take vows of Honesty, Integrity and Service; Church leaders must read again the teachings of Jesus and return to leading their people in Jesus' "The Way the Truth and the Life"; Married religious optional, maybe part-time; priests should be the ones to visit homes and learn about their parishioners lives; priests should be able to choose to be celibate if it is their calling, also choose to be open to marriage "God made them male and female"; Changing attitudes of the clergy and bishops from hierarchical to community minded; Outdated teachings from past Popes and bishops have caused God's people to rebel and leave the Church—they must change with the times; Relinquish education to the state and focus on Faith Education in the parishes; Encourage our young people to return to Mass and the sacraments; Major prayers of the Mass need to be more inclusive e.g. Nicene Creed could read "Men and women"; Prayers of the Faithful should be formed and READ by the faithful; More power and involvement of qualified people on parish Finance Councils; To speak to our friends and family about how important our participation will be in the Plenary Council; Compulsory parish Councils—democratically elected to be re-elected every 3 years; All members of the community to STAND for the Great Amen; Recognition of the giftedness of each individual and subsequent delegation of roles.

- Post confirmation involvement
- Catholic education—academic, not experiential
- God wants Catholic families to keep children interested in their religion
- How to get young people involved or back to the faith?
- Church to be relevant to younger people
- More personal guidance
- Healing of the broken (in all the different aspects of life)—to make them all heart whole
- An inversion to the current service model of people serving and supporting the cardinals and bishops to that of the cardinals and bishops serving the people e.g. that the people should be given the 'places of honour' at Church gatherings instead of the cardinals and bishops.
- Do not blindly accept the status quo of the hierarchy or current practices
- Bring the Church outside these 4 walls
- God wants us to reach out to others
- God is asking us to be together—family to other Catholic members
- To be generous and loving to our neighbours
- To spread the gospel by being more Christian
- What is the HEART of our Church endeavours? God's heart and Our heart. Conforming our will, our choices, our heart to God's
- What do we want to share of our faith and our Church with others? Jesus and his power in our lives and the Church. Loving and supportive communities. Champion of the needy.
- What 'face' do we wish others to see when they think of the Catholic Church? The face of Jesus—loving, merciful, welcoming.

That we construct a more inclusive Church. Young people need to be more valued and encouraged by our presenting a Church which is more relevant to their lives. We need a Church which continues to be proactive in the implementation of the Vat II philosophy, ideas, practices and openness, where everyone is valued and no one is excluded for any reason. Canon Law was created by human beings in the Church and can be changed by human beings, so that the Church becomes more inclusive as Jesus was. The experiences in our families of exclusion have caused great damage, some of which appears permanent. There are people on the margins who have suffered for years because of exclusions over mixed marriages and marriages of divorced Catholics. And the present system of annulments is very severe and unfriendly. The separation of clerics and non-clerics causes a division which is unhealthy and unproductive to both parties and was partly the cause of the terrible abuse scandal.

Would the Church consider women becoming priests? The influence of women is strong for our children, helping to form them into the future (both spiritually and socially), where everyone is seen and accepted as being equal.

- The influence women have within family.
- Acceptance of all individuals, from different cultures, religions or backgrounds.
- Women are the image and likeness

<p>of Mother Mary. • Women are nurturers. • Women are generally more willing to look at the bigger picture of life. • The role of women, particularly mothers, encompasses a broad spectrum of roles.</p>
<p>Inclusiveness in the Church in today's changing society, including the teachings, structure e.g. female deacons, role modelling, acceptance and welcome, communion available to all Catholics regardless of being divorced or sexual orientation. To also simplify annulments i.e. to shorten timeframes and processes to allow divorcees to continue in life as members of the Church. To allow children of Catholic parents who are not married in Church to be baptised.</p>
<p>We think that it is important in our present day that people are taught how to share our faith or evangelise in the way Jesus wants us to by way of; - Being more accepting of others and being more welcoming (being more inclusive) - Having programs e.g.: renewal of Faith, Bible studies— explanations of the Gospels messages - Pastoral visits, where the parish priests does visitations to the general community not to evangelise but to just connect with the community. - More Youth programs and youth groups - To support and encourage parents of the Religious Education Program children to come and attend Mass more.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be better prepared. To have better structures in place to train, support and provide ongoing formation to our priests to be able to cope with the range of responsibilities and demands that arise within our parishes. Our priests have so many roles within our parishes. They are often from other countries and cultures and have lived with a much different experience of religion to what is encountered in Australia. We expect a lot of them, from daily demands to the many different groups and roles they are meant to assume within the organisation of the parish. The support for our priests needs to be focused in on. Are we placing the right priests together in parishes? Are we placing priests in parishes that they resonate well with? If the priest is in the best position to lead the parish and well supported in what they do, the liturgical life of the parish is enabled to flourish and the elements of parish life will flow and be able to fulfil the role of evangelising and supporting the faith life of our parishes.</p>
<p>That our Church community of the future address the needs of all its members, through the teachings of Jesus Christ.</p>
<p>To connect with families and the Youth of our parishes.</p>
<p>To go out and Evangelise and become an invitational Church that welcomes people into the parish.</p>
<p>1. God is asking us to pray so that our bishops LISTEN. 2. The experiment of importing clergy from overseas has to cease. The cultural divide is too great and the difficulty in hearing their homilies and the content of old theology has caused 3 of my nearby parishes to drop in numbers by up to 50%. 3. There is a huge resource amongst our semi-retired and retired laity who could support our parishes and enrich our liturgies. 4. Some of our young ordained are poorly formed both theologically and socially. To have some of our recently ordained spend their homily on venial and mortal sin leaves the older congregation thinking back to the 1950's and the younger ones despairing. 5. Women must play an integral role in the FORMATION of our clergy. 6. The Church must expand its base of recruitment to the priesthood to married men and train men and women to the diaconate. 7. Invite married priests to return and provide a decent salary. 8. Review canon law and call for compulsory parish councils with equal participation of men and women. It is essential that our PP receives regular honest feedback from parish councillors and parishioners. 9. Perhaps we could have celibate male and female study alongside married teachers, doctors, nurses and counsellors. 10. The elevation of senior salaried male and female in leadership positions will be crucial to dismantling clericalism.</p>
<p>God is asking us in Australia to recognise that women should have a more prominent and equal roll in the life of the Church. Women should feel more welcomed by the use of inclusive language within the Mass. "For us men and our salvation" was not part of the creed until the new translation and was a slap in the face to many of us. It may seem a little thing but when the Church treats half the population like they're unworthy it is hard to see how it can remain relevant. Jesus challenged many of the Jewish traditions and maintained the basic truths of the love of God. If he could do that 2000 years ago why can't the Church take that leap and include women as priests? It won't change the</p>

love of God or our love for one another. It may actually make the Church a more compassionate and nurturing environment. Growing up in [ - ] and coming through the Catholic Primary, Secondary and Tertiary systems, I have often encountered the Church under the leadership of men whose empathy was lacking. I have met a number of good men who were working toward becoming a priest and fell in love and married wonderful supportive women. I believe that if we were to allow priests to marry we would have shepherds who have a grassroots understanding of the needs of families and a sensitivity to the changing experiences that children in particular are being exposed to. Working in a Catholic primary school I see the changing nature of family and if the Church is to remain relevant to children it has to be seen as inclusive and non-judgemental. They cannot believe that God loves them when the Church does accept them and their families as they are. There are some magnificent priests working in the Church today. They are men committed to service, who give fully to their parish and include everyone in the workings of the parish. Sadly, these men admit that they “break” with Church protocols so that they can be more open and welcoming. Why should they have to do this? It is so important to have priests with people skills and priests who will engage with children. There are so many that are troubled, set in their ways and see themselves as the leader or centre, not the facilitator of parish life. If they don’t have the skills to run a parish effectively, don’t give them a parish. And if you don’t have enough priests, then try the other half of the population that you could be tapping into. Women are worthy. Women are capable. Women are not unclean or ungodly.

I think God is asking us to be open, loving and sincere. We are faced by many challenges, and it is a great opportunity for us Christians to share what are our fundamental beliefs and why believe this. It is an opportunity to be open and explain our stance on euthanasia and gay marriage, why and how we came to hold these ideas in our hearts. There is also an opportunity for us to open our doors to all peoples, ensuring that we truly embrace what Jesus stood for, which was to take care of the sinners and those who were struggling in our world, rather than those who are self-proclaimed God-loving people. I think this is also a time for us to question our past and present, discuss openly whether we have made mistakes and whether we need to adapt, take a bold stance or admit that we have been wrong about certain matters that have occurred inside and outside the Church.

To be there for its people of the Church and to provide the necessary assistance required of an individual when asking for help rather than it being ignored, or swept under the carpet hoping that the problem will just go away on its own. To not be treated as though you are stupid or even insane. The Church has disappointed me immensely however my love of God and my belief in the Church Jesus founded will never falter. What I am asking for is for a right to an exorcist to the prayers that an exorcist can perform. Each diocese under canon law is required to have an appointed exorcist however here in [ - ] we have none as it seems that the Church sees it as an unnecessary or outdated practice. Which in fact now more than ever in history we need the help of the Church and its rites. ...

Enculturation of priests/seminarians from overseas is essential in order for them to understand and engage with the diverse Australian culture; strengthening pastoral parish councils to ensure there is engagement with a wider demographic i.e. include youth and their voice; inclusive practices in decision-making on matters that impact on lives of the faithful—wider leadership roles for youth, women, men, age-groups; Third Rite of Reconciliation to be offered—if we are to be a Church that is a 'field hospital' (Pope Francis), we need to offer healing and reconciliation opportunities in a more expansive [way].

- To be able to better understand and clearly articulate the teachings and doctrine of the Church - To be able to express that freely in secular environments without being made to feel irrelevant or disrespected - To reinvigorate our Catholic culture (faith, values, ideals) and the meaning behind the traditions and celebrations (e.g. All Saints vs Halloween), especially within Catholic schools

To witness and share our faith—not to be shy of being a Catholic. We need to make time and keep time for God in our busyness. To be an example to our youth to be an inclusive and healing Church in humility.

<p>Witness to our faith and courage to live it, trusting in God's abundant love. Catholics should not be judgmental and be accepting of all.</p>
<p>To discern the future purpose of our Catholic schools in light of having a lack of practicing Catholics within our Catholic schools—both families as well as staff.</p>
<p>To be inclusive and accepting of all people in our community. This means being accepting of different points of view, accepting new knowledge and science, understanding others, sharing and listening to others, to help understand the needs of others. We need the tools and guidance, to better assist and support the needs of others in the wider community. In looking at the needs of others this includes engaging with our youth and guiding the next generation of the Church, new migrant and ethnic communities and those who feel excluded by the Church e.g. those who identify as LGBTQI or those who are divorced. A particular issue is those who want to participate in the Church but cannot do so fully e.g. divorced Catholics not being able to participate in the Eucharist. Modern society is so complex, that many people from all walks of life do not fit neatly into the way life and families were formed a century ago. Now we have blended families, families who have children prior to marriage, those who are marrying for the first time but are marrying a divorced person and are unable to receive the sacrament of Marriage.</p>
<p>We should work towards changing the image of our Church by being Christians in words and actions.</p>
<p>To ensure our youth are made to feel welcome and encourage them to have a voice and to participate safely in parish life. We all have experiences that our youth basically disappear after the sacramental programs. Sporting commitments and busy family life definitely influence this. Something that we would like to see is for Fr to have a specific part of the homily to focus on children. Priests/deacons need to be trained how to engage with the children at their level, both in homilies and the normal day to day encounters. Shortened Mass (youth Mass) followed by a social activity has proven to be successful in 2 of our parishes.</p>
<p>Reconnect Youth—how do we get them to reconnect? Outsider—how do we reconnect to those groups of people who felt they're outcast (e.g. divorcee, gay, migrants, Aboriginals).</p>
<p>I believe God is asking of the Catholic Church in Australia to be more transparent and accountable. Gone are the days of the great divide between the clergy hierarchy and the obedient parishioners. This naive approach has resulted in embarrassment and humiliation to all Catholics throughout the world. As parishioners, we need to know who runs our Church and how it is run. We, at this day and age, still have parish councils that are chosen by the priest and re-elections are never sought from the parishioners. Why are funds of the Church never divulged at annual meetings of the Church? The clergy's priority is to ensure the spirituality of the parishioners not collecting funds. We need a more inclusive Church for every parishioner, not just the selected few. Whilst there are many good areas of the faith, we need our priests to be more approachable. Not the "my way or the highway approach." The 34 Churches of Australia should answer to one central administration, not doing the own thing throughout Australia. The sexual issues would have been detected ages ago with this approach. I love my Church very much, please not let me lose faith with the present approach.</p>
<p>Explain the early Church—before we had churches. Explain we live in a “pagan” era. Explain the history of the Mass—use words, film, DVD. Lectionary—please could we move away from the NRSV? The word “Adoption” whatever it means Open RCIA to everyone. The Church to be open and transparent, Dogma and Canon Laws. To speak out more re justice—migrants and beliefs. To ensure the youth feel wanted in the Church. To involve women in the liturgy i.e. Eucharist. Clergy to be allowed to marry. Women as priests. Recognition of individual’s commitment to their Faith by a “special” sacrament (as with Holy Communion, etc.) as a further rite of passage, similar to “Marriage”. Exposure to the Christian Mystics for all age groups and the encouragement of our Catholic Mysticism. How can we get young people back into the Church? How can we encourage parents to take responsibility for nurturing faith in their children? How can the public learn to trust the Church again after the royal commission into sexual abuse? How can the Church be more contemporary without losing its essence? How can women be recognised/respected more in the Church? How can people feel more a sense of the sacred? Women in the Church—Mystics and</p>

<p>Women. As in marriage, there is a balance of men and women—in the Church, the Hierarchy are ALL men—there is no female energy and heart to balance. Could women be too ruled by their hormones? Study the Christian Mystics as an inspirational spiritual resource. The world is searching for Mysticism within Catholicism. Need this mysticism in Religions study for children as well. Learn how to pray.</p>
<p>God is asking for a Church that includes Married priest for the Diocesan. God is asking for Woman priesthood. Anointing of the sick to be given to religious man and woman, not only the clergy because of the lack of priest in hospital and nursing homes. Lots are dying without the sacrament of the sick. More women to have an active role in administrative works. Religious to return to wear their habit and to show the world we still around. Most are hiding in the civilian clothes a return to a Church with beautiful liturgy and hymns.</p>
<p>Prayer and Discernment. To have our say at this opportunity of Plenary Council and gathering information.</p>
<p>To listen to Jesus in the Gospels and begin again to follow his teachings; To try to develop new ways to HONESTLY develop our faith; To bring people back to Mass and the sacraments to encourage all family members to return to God; For education of children to care for others, family, friends; For the youth to get involved in the Plenary Council sessions; How can we best support our young people to walk and live the message of the Gospel; How can we support priests as they carry the burden of paedophilia of brother priests; How can we attract young men into our seminaries; How can we (the Church) become more relative in today's society; Can priests be better "formed" and "informed", especially those from different cultures; What is the role of women in our Australian Church; Can we take "inventory" of the mistakes currently in place—and make adjustments; How can the Church of Australia regain credibility; The Church should get out of Catholic schools and children should receive instruction in all the sacraments from the parish; To offer support and encouragement to small country parishes to try to keep them going; For family pamphlet/photos—family prayer and actions, do kind deeds, ask children to share how they helped someone each day, sharing time, befriend a new child.</p>
<p>Having a youth group as a youngster experiencing live music was a form of praying and attracted you to the Church. Having daily regular prayers with family e.g. Divine Mercy, rosary, Angelus. Teaching young children how to pray and why to pray at school. Regular prayers like 'Our Father', 'Hail Mary' and rosary. And silent prayer with GOD. Through prayer, teach the young children how to have a personal relationship with Jesus/God. At home and at our school.</p>
<p>Increase lay leadership in the Church hierarchy. Improve marriage preparation for couples. Better Church music and stipulation of certain music requirements.</p>
<p>Help others to help ourselves.</p>
<p>To be more involved with how our Church moves forward after the fall out of the Royal Commission into sexual abuse within the Catholic Church.</p>
<p>God wants is to have the sacrificial priesthood restored in His Church. The Church does not have a "paedophile priest" problem, it has a homosexual priest problem as the sexual abuse scandal and subsequent investigations into it has found; the vast majority of abuse was homosexual abuse directed at vulnerable young boys. Screening procedures for candidates for the priesthood need to ensure that homosexual men are not ordained into the priesthood. The Church needs to cease lecturing Her people about environmental consciousness and the evils of Capitalism, the business of the Church is Salvation of Souls and it is only through Christ's teachings that we may bring about the husbandry of the natural environment and the trammelling of the excesses of Capitalism. The Church must become more staunch in its battle against the evils of Materialistic Atheism and its children; Communism, Socialism, National Socialism, Nationalism. The Church must become more vocal in its fight against the evils of abortion and euthanasia. The Church needs to abandon attempting dialogue with Islam and reject any notion that Islam is in any way Divine and that its book is in any way "Holy". A prayer for the conversion of Muslims and the destruction of Islam should be introduced to the Mass. The Church must reject the current Pope's embrace of Zionism.</p>

This is not to say that we should stand against the State of Israel, but against the profoundly anti-Catholic and anti-Christian religious Zionism which is at its heart. The Church needs to stand up for God (The Blessed Trinity), Life, Truth, the Family and private property, as dictated by the Ten Commandments. The Church in Australia needs to work hard to remove from the Catholic schools the apologetic stance of staff as they teach the Faith (At a Catholic school into which I was enrolling my eldest son the Religious Studies teacher told the parents that she was sorry she had to teach all of "this stuff", but it was a Catholic school, and she only had a part-time Maths position, so she'd "drawn the short straw" but she'd and get through it as quickly as possible. The woman sitting next to me said, "Christ, that's a relief, it was bad enough that I had to get her baptised to get her in here; let alone, pay to have her sit through all of that stuff!").

First of all, you have to understand this is a question academics have thought up without any consideration for those of us who are not or have not studied theology in length like you have had. So, it is very difficult for us to answer this question. How do we know what God is thinking or asking of us? He is a mythical person who we believe in, but it is you who will decide what God is asking of us, will you even read this and make a note?

To share God's love to younger Generation, stay connected with God in their lives-perhaps less formality in order to stay connected in more appealing way. Investigating the religious education in schools especially in higher secondary. Treating others with courtesy, respect and peaceable tongue. Applying gospel to daily lives, workplace, families, etc. Need to engage with other Christian neighbours. More Faith development to be offered for parishioners. Together we stand for Freedom of Religion.

Going back to the basic invitation of Jesus along the shore of the Sea of Galilee—"Follow me and I will make you fish for people" (Mk 1:17 NRSV). Take on that responsibility and make the Church relevant especially to the younger generation and the marginalised. "... to remember that the Church did not die and rise from the dead. Jesus did."; "... that our faith is not in an institution but in a person: Jesus ..." (Martin, James SJ, Jesus A Pilgrimage, 163).

"WHAT DO YOU THINK GOD IS ASKING OF US IN AUSTRALIA AT THIS TIME?" The Prayer Group in [ - ] parish met on 8 November 2018 and discussed the above question. This group has been in existence for 30 years. On this occasion, not all members were able to be present, and nine members participated in sharing and providing input on the above question. They put forward 40 points, some of the points being repeated, from which the following key themes are listed. Members declared that the Prayer Group, having been running in the parish for 30 years, has been a source of spiritual nourishment, strengthening of their faith, and an expression of their love for others. We would like to see more encouragement of small groups in parishes to help develop faith sharing, etc. Married clergy needs to become an option. This includes allowing priests to marry, and permitting priests who were formerly in ministry have married and now wish to return to full time priestly ministry. Clericalism has a detrimental effect on communities. More focus on seminarians training in social and psychological aspects of their development and training for future ministry. Women to be included at all levels of ministry, decision-making, leadership and governance in the Church. This point has been repeated in various groups in the parish. Inclusiveness. The Church needs to be fully inclusive of women, lay men, and marginalised groups, migrants, refugees, divorcees, those living together, LGBTs and others. The Church needs to reach out to these persons and embrace them. In the Church's liturgy, inclusive language needs to be used. The sacraments need to be seen as nourishment and not a prize or reward for doing the right thing. The principle of subsidiarity needs to be embraced, where decisions are made at the lowest appropriate level. Young people. An emphasis needs to be placed on reaching out to and engaging these persons, and encouraging them in their faith journey to develop a relationship with Christ. Repeal of the encyclical on birth control, *Humanae Vitae* 1968. Place an emphasis on prayer, formal and informal.

God is asking that we bring our Church back to the most basic principles of love, compassion, understanding and forgiveness. The hierarchy in the Church need to remember that they are there to serve the people and not themselves of their own egos. They need to really listen to Pope Francis

and his calls for bishops and priests to become servants of the people. Priests need to refrain from making judgements on people, especially priests from overseas where some are still deeply rooted in the dogma of the Church and feel it is their duty to set people straight and often do this in a most unloving manner, consequently that can be another reason that some people leave the Church. The Church needs to do all in its power to try to regain the trust and respect of the people after the horrific abuse scandals. We somehow need to listen to the young people and make our churches more attractive and meaningful to them. They are our future and our Australian population is looking to become a very small proportion of our churches unless this huge problem can be addressed.

The summary response for our group is: "To be a more local and responsive Church that listens to the voice of the local people." The above is a summary of four separate responses:

(i) To be open to doing things differently, particularly by allowing the laity to have a greater role in the Church.

(ii) To rely on God and pray with trust in God's providence.

(iii) To have courage and a positive outlook and approach the future with hope—to be hope-filled—and not constrained by our recent history—to be pro-active in evangelisation.

(iv) To be a welcoming Church that reaches out to the stranger and the estranged in an authentic and relevant way.

God is asking us to embrace our sacramental Identity completely as Catholics, particularly regarding the Holy Eucharistic and Reconciliation. In my parish, we have the blessing of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration. It has dramatically enriched and deepened our faith, both individually and as a community. Our Blessed sacrament Chapel has brought great renewal to the lives of all, young and old, and we feel more united with each other and Jesus. There should be one in every parish. My friends in other parishes where there is also Perpetual Adoration Chapel, feel the same way. Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration has helped us to live out our faith with new desire and confidence.

To Review the issue of divorce and people coming back to the sacraments.

God is asking us to love him. To do this, we must know him so to return to the gospel to fully engage in the liturgy, a meaningful liturgy and in personal prayer. God is asking of the Church to exercise leadership in dealing with sexual morality in the culture of the Church and to foster the role of hierarchy as a factor in the sex abuse scandals and other areas. To be a sacrament to others in our parish, at home and in the society. To see God in people and to reflect God's will in our actions and interactions with others. Transparency at all levels that demonstrate faithfulness to the Gospels. God is asking of us in Australia at this time to re-evaluate our stand on today's controversial topics and those that are considered taboo.

We need the Church to be more relevant today to youth in the Church. How is the Church going to address the drain of youth in the Church? Youth formation - Stick to the truth, follow God's word. Spread God's word in Australia's society by engagement and participation by our words and action, give a powerful testimony. To be missionary. To be mutual respectful of diverse opinions. Strengthen the faith that we already have, how best to show our love of God to others, Let them know God's loves each and every one equally, Outreach events to preach the good news, weekly fortnightly making to spread and understand the Bible testimonies to be shared, More angelistic and accepting Church, openness of the Church to new ways of doing things, for example making the Mass more interactive or making all of the parish activities more attractive and more amicable to people's involvement.

Given the current state of the world at large, as well as on a smaller scale in Australia, God may be asking us to take better care of the environment, as well as better care towards those in society who are disadvantaged. The amount of natural disasters occurring around this time across the globe could be a sign from God that we aren't taking care of, or appreciating our Earth as much as we should be. In addition to this, Australian society in particular has been having a large amount of debate in regards to refugees and asylum seekers. The level of apathy many people have towards the lives of refugees is astounding, and is something that desperately needs to be addressed in

<p>greater society. Regardless of the risk of terrorism, people should not be treated in such a way that their lives are at stake, particularly the lives of young children who have no choice in what happens to them.</p>
<p>To be equal and expecting and have good morals—the Bible has been twisted and taken out of context so much. It's been turned into a tool for discrimination and to control society into thinking things in society are bad such as same-sex marriage.</p>
<p>I am an individual who attends a Catholic school, is a Christian, but am Pentecostal. As a Christian, I believe that in this time God is calling all individuals to spread the gospel more, especially since it is nearing the end times. I feel that some of Australian society does not have any faith or any belief in a God, and it is time as a whole Christian community we attempt to change that. For example, parish communities could go out and minister, and not only wait for individuals to attend Mass. I also believe that God wants Christians in Australia to be more involved in politics, to try and clarify our opinion on particular issues within society. For example, with gay marriage, individuals who are not of the Catholic faith ridiculed those who were, for the opinions they held. If the Church tries to clarify and correctly explain the Church's stand, then maybe people wouldn't have such a negative opinion on the Church. However, I completely understand how the Church placed their opinion on this issue, and was bypassed by the majority of those who opposed this opinion. Ultimately, I just think that the Church within Australia should go out into the community more and be more involved. I know this role may be designated to 'missionaries' or others, how I feel that as an individual who is called by God, we all have the duty to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to be like Christ in a contemporary world. I think God wants us to be welcoming of refugees and anyone who is vulnerable or marginalised. The fact that we have homeless people in such a lucky country is particularly distressing. Our Indigenous brothers and sisters are also still on the fringes. Being like Christ today would mean that we reach out to those who are like the lepers and the prostitutes and the tax collectors. This is a basic part of who we are as Christians yet it seems like we have all forgotten what the point of our faith is all about. I think that God is telling us that humanity is worth saving as Christ saved us before.</p>
<p>To take better care of the Earth and our resources. To welcome and embrace the marginalised at times when we feel compelled to reject others and their differences. To practice empathy and to try to understand the identities and experiences of others. To educate ourselves on the views and identities of minorities, and what is important to them. To uphold the rights of the marginalised even when social justice issues do not affect us as privileged people.</p>
<p>Visible accountability of clergy, Church governance, faith formation at an earlier age, and for parents/adults, knowledge and joy of Mass. Inspire the spread of joy of Gospels and Jesus, build knowledge and understanding of faith, song as an expression of joy, homelessness and poverty more active voice in social justice, clergy and marriage, the priesthood vocation, youth ministry, leadership, bringing people back to the Church, inclusivity and welcoming of all, build connections between people and Church, involve parents, children and youth in meaningful and relevant ways, importance of the homily, women in the Church, integrity and sincerity needed for success, peace and harmony in our world, live a Christian life, and demonstrate our values, faith into action.</p>
<p>I've entered 3 points on the 1st Dec 2018, but I left one thing to recommend to the Australia Plenary Council: 4. Proper sound system used in the Churches as a vital and critical equipment. I encounter many Catholic Churches are not equipped with proper sound system, mostly with the ECHOING problem. This significantly reduces the engagement in the Mass or other Church activities. Solution: proper engineering/re-engineering in installing/fixing Church's sound system. God bless Australia. [ - ], PhD [ - ] parish, [ - ], [ - ] [ - ] 26th Dec 2018.</p>
<p>To spend time with God and be strong in our faith, and pass on our faith and awareness of God to our future generation and keep the candle of Christianity alive, burning and strong.</p>
<p>We're living in the wake of the greatest possible disaster that could have descended upon the Church in this country (the sexual abuse crisis). Firstly, I think God wants every possible effort to be directed towards offering assistance to victims of abuse in the Church. Secondly, I think that God</p>

wants as us a Church collective to hang our head in shame. And I think God wants us to do so over an extended period of time. I also think God wants us to examine how this disaster could have ever have become so pronounced. I don't want to pre-empt the results of such discernment, but there is a word that has been bandied about in connection with the sexual abuse crisis and it is perplexing me. That word is 'clericalism.' 'Clericalism'—whatever that word is supposed to mean—looms large in many people's musings on how the sexual abuse crisis got as bad as it did (including of course very responsible people who played official roles in the Commonwealth's Royal Commission into the matter). The key thing to ask any person when they mention the word 'clericalism' is: what do you mean by 'clericalism'? I say this because I think that underlying many people's opinions about the connection between the sexual abuse crisis and clericalism lay disparate Theologies of the priesthood. Perhaps the most striking illustration of this came in the proposal of the Royal Commission that: the theological notion that the priest undergoes an 'ontological change' at ordination, so that he is different to ordinary human beings and permanently a priest, is a dangerous component of the culture of clericalism. I think we need to recognise the different Theologies at work here. Obviously, there are going to be those of us who strongly disagree with the proposal that thinking of the priest as 'ontologically different' to others is a dangerous idea. Indeed, many would see it as indispensable to their understanding of the Church. Going further, there would be those who would argue that rejecting this theological notion would be tantamount to—in the want of a more ecumenically sensitive phrase—becoming a Protestant in disguise. I think God wants us to hold firmly the notion of the ontological difference of the priest. But I think he wants us to keep in mind where the priesthood sits in terms of the overall scheme of Church teaching on the sacraments. The sacrament of Holy Orders is a sacrament at the Service of Communion. As long as we keep the overall perspective of 'Communion' in view, we cannot go wrong. If 'clericalism' means bishops and priests embracing their spiritual gift of governance in the Church (which I don't think it does), then 'clericalism' is the solution to the sexual abuse crisis—not the root cause of it. Bishops who embrace this, their spiritual gift will wield their shepherd's crooks effectively and break the necks of all those 'wolves' who have made their way into the sheepfold.

Recruit and train priests who will help the Church grow. 1. Priests need to understand their parishioners and the human needs of parishioners should be part of their training (maybe a model like Marriage Encounter in which lay people give feedback). Priests need to consider how to be loving and invitational (like Jesus). They should understand how alienating long or boring sermons are to the congregation. 2. Priests should be MONITORED for performance in Masses, marriages, funerals, etc. 3. Effective priests should form a leadership group to coach others. 4. Priests who are known to be alienating should be removed from parish priest role until they show better response to feedback.

To be agents of transformation—by loving all unconditionally and being a witness to Gospel values. I believe ALL is not negotiable—and includes 'enemies', those who would do you harm, non-believers, those who do not consider themselves 'friends of Jesus', ALL those who may have been the subject of the beautiful metaphor of the 'one lost sheep'. The concept of Catholic should, I believe, not exclude any human being, as recipients of God's love and salvation. I would like to include some extracts from Pontifex and the 1st Sunday of Advent Mass that might inadvertently seem to challenge this concept of Catholicity—later, if this Q'aire permits.

Catholic children to be instructed on the teachings of the Church (Morals, Behaviour); Children to be given the truths about abortions, sins, suicide "you shall know the truth and the truth will set you free"; For Catechism teachers to be nuns and priests and those lay people that are practicing their faith; Need counselling for Adults (Male and Female) for addiction and for Marriage issues; Regarding child abuse we need to educate Catholic parents especially those that are unaware of what child abuse is, to be guided at the time of birth; For safety and security of the elderly Catholics, widows and widowers in homes; To raise awareness of Yoga (New Age Movement) that it is NOT Christian; Need exorcist priests for deliverances; priests have to have a say—need to be given an opportunity to speak out against the complaints against them; priests should be allowed to marry;

<p>parish community should have a duty of care for less fortunate members; Music at Mass should be open to present day spiritual songs; A Church for the people; People to have more say in governance of parish, not a dictatorship.</p>
<p>To be a Holy people; To be a prayer-filled people; To have a sense of the divine; To be re-Christianised—not knowing more but believing more; Church finances—take it out from the hands of the clergy and let them concentrate on spiritual matters; Return to the value of the original/early Church—the people are the Church and the religious are there to serve; Make our religion more relevant to the young or else we might not have a RC Church when we are gone; "Smell like the Sheep" bishops—To visit each parish in their dioceses in a round robin way to come down and mingle and talk to the sheep without their hat and staff; To be mindful of the environment by not overusing our resources; Each of us should be able to have our own personality, thoughts and emotions treated with respect and not be pushed into a community chosen by others; To limit the population so that all humans can have enough food and shelter—not just the lucky few; For each of us to seek out our special talent and use it for the good of everyone around us; We need to deal with birth control as practiced by the Church—younger generations cannot go to communion if they limit families so therefore why should they attend Mass, then fall away from their parish; We are all different parts of the body of Christ—don't let leaders of the country, parish or group try to make us think the same.</p>
<p>God is asking us to engage the Youth with open discussions with the issues and Catholic beliefs facing the Catholic Church, especially with the recent controversial events (sex abuse, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, abortion, etc.).</p>
<p>God is asking us to have an ATTITUDE shift in our Church.</p>
<p>Church has to listen and clarify life's realities.</p>
<p>God is asking us to make the Church more exciting.</p> <p>God wants us to ENGAGE the youth of our Church.</p> <p>God wants us to look at how the Church can effectively engage our Youth MORE.</p> <p>God is asking us to make the Church more ATTRACTIVE for youth.</p> <p>Make the Church more active and involved, especially for the youth.</p>
<p>God is asking us to evolve and change with the times. I believe we need to make changes to layout and proceedings of the Mass. Of course, we do not want to lose our roots as Catholics but we need to design the Mass more around the youth and younger generations. Fundamentally, we get more out of the music and readings at the Mass. I think more time should be spent on focusing and honing these things to get the younger generations back to Church and interested/and involved in the Mass. We need to alter the Mass to suit changing times. Otherwise we will be left with an elderly Church. I know we are not riverside (Christian Churches) but the young flock to those celebrations. Music is a really large part of that worship and also reflection on the gospel and scriptures, messages for us all to live by.</p>
<p>To be environmentally responsible. To value people regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation or age. To allow the divorced to receive the sacraments, Jesus said "Let you who have not sinned, cast the first stone." People suffer a great deal when a marriage breaks down and then to be refused communion and expected to be single for the rest of their life. Mistakes happen! It doesn't seem to be a fair expectation of a Church representing a loving God. We need to do better for those who have suffered marriage breakdown. There needs to be recognition of a second relationship. We are human and that humanness results in mistakes being made. I also believe priests should be allowed to marry. In Genesis, it says it is not good for man to be alone and woman was created. Some of the apostles were married. I feel God wants us to be open to change. God</p>

wants us to be living in the light of Christ. The things that happened re sexual abuse of children are unforgivable. The Church should have acted. Nothing like this should ever happen again. Those who didn't act when made aware of what was happening should also be held responsible—they should be made accountable. The comments I hear about the Catholic Church as a result of the sexual abuse of children are shocking, in many cases unfair but never-the-less you reap what you sow. Maybe if the bishops and cardinals were less incline to condemn and be so judgemental of others e.g. The gay, lesbian, divorce and concentrated more on social justice, the poor, the marginalised, families—traditional and others its image would improve and the tide of Catholics leaving for Christian Churches that are more inclusive might wane. When praying and reflecting, I am sad and distraught about what is happening to the Catholic Church. I'm called to sacrament but saddened at the attitude of some that we're better than every other Christian faith. Given the sexual abuse scandal, obviously we are not. God is calling us to be people of love not condemnation and it is this that will heal our Church and restore its good standing. We have to stand up against injustice and spread the love of God through example, not by claiming high moral ground all the time. We need to be good examples as followers of Christ and lead people to because they recognise goodness. We should be seen helping charities as well as Catholic ones. Catholic education should be for the low-income earner as much as the rich. I hear about parents being made to feel inadequate and children shamed because they can't afford all of the things they are expected to have money if they have— What does it matter if the sneakers a parent can afford have a blue stripe or the black school shoes. I stopped teaching in Catholic Ed as I was called to work in public schools. Why is it that in the prayer of the faithful we only pray for children and teachers in Catholic schools? Aren't the rest of us important too? God doesn't want us to be elitist.

First of all, I think that God is asking of us nothing other than to “proclaim the Good News to all people” and “make disciples” (Mt 28), to “build the Kingdom” (Lk 17:20), to serve (Mk 10:41), love (Mt 22:39–42; Jn 13:35), to follow (Mt 4:19), to worship and pray (Jn 4:23; 1 Th 5), to never neglect the ministry of the Word of God (Acts 6:2). Do we assume that we are being asking something different in Australia? That, perhaps, God is asking the World to proclaim, build, serve, love, follow, to worship and pray ... but that somehow Australians are not being asked to do this? Do we think that these commands were good for ‘back then’, but at this time they no longer apply? Perhaps the question is, knowing already what God has asked of us, why aren't we doing it? Or even to ask, “What does it look like in Australia at this time” to “proclaim the Good News to all people” and “make disciples” (Mt 28), to “build the Kingdom” (Lk 17:20), to serve (Mk 10:41), love (Mt 22:39–42; Jn 13:35), to follow (Mt 4:19), to worship and pray (Jn 4:23, 1 Th 5), to never neglect the ministry of the Word of God (Acts 6:2). From the earliest time the challenge was to actually DO what we were tasked to do. To be authentic in discipleship (Lk 6:46; Jm 1:22). To hear and act. To be made new, to be renewed by what we hear, who we encounter and how we respond. And thereby, to be the way that we support others to be made new, to be renewed by what we say and do, to be an encounter for them. We certainly don't have to look far to see the times that we have failed to do what we are asked or when our responding has fallen short. But is not nearly enough to merely say “we won't do that” (any more, or again). It is not enough to condemn our failings, even though we must do so. It is insufficient to merely say that we condemn evil and want to stop abuse of the vulnerable. It is not enough to say we want to stop clericalism. It is not enough to say we want to stop abuse of power, or the lack of transparency in decision-making. And we cannot merely do what we have always done—this has failed us, and will continue to do so. We must do thing differently. Consistently the Gospels tell us what to DO—rather than what to not do. We are not asked to stop doing things, but rather to do things well and be transformed by them. I think we are all being called to respond with courage. To act differently. To be authentic. To be open to change—a change that transforms who we are and how we live.

Positivity. More compassion. Looking out for others. Being more committed to religion. Teaching morals. Keep in mind traditional values in modern context. Staying true to faith. Caring for the world—creation. Giving back to the community. Caring for others.

<p>To teach the essentials of what it means to be a Catholic i.e. what are the core requirements of our faith?</p>
<p>- Say what the Church stands for: don't be diffident, be more confident, Australians like straight talk, affiliation is voluntary, and people do not have to belong. - Tell the history of the Church, which has done and still does wonderful work. - Learn from mistakes of the past. Apologise and compensate. Take firm steps to ensure it never happens again. - Go back to what's important: Faith, Family and Friends - Be skeptics and not cynics - Lead AND follow - At least have Hope, if not Faith.</p>
<p>I dare to believe the Lord of History and Life wishes the Church in Australia to be vibrant sign of living and practical love which is seen to be a beacon for a Higher reality (God) and confidently Christian in standing for and proclaiming its own values and the message of Emmanuel—God with Us—and that we are loved. We don't need too many reminders of our sometimes, frail state. A Church that engages with society—especially through its Catholic school system—and recalls 'they will know you are my disciples if you love one another'; a welcoming Church with room to hear dissent and respect feedback (sometimes the God the atheist does not believe in is not the God we believe in either). Merciful to those who find it tough to wend their pilgrim way, encouraging, especially to people whose contact with the Church is 'seasonal'. Our Church—us, the People of God—should be a strong advocate for the 'little guys' in the community—bring a Kingdom vision to bear on reality of our lives and those around us—up to nationally and internationally. A simpler, approachable Church which invites the disaffected, the part timers, those with grievances, to be listened to without threat (even preparation for this Council could allow for 'anonymous' but open meetings where people, young and old, and not too visibly connected, can have their say so leaders (and the troops) can gain a better understanding of how things are for many who share similar aspirations but feel estranged or blank in their connection and attitude to the Church). Let the Church build on its record of being a place and a community where many have felt they belong through many years. A sign of the Kingdom and values of Jesus the Christ and His Gospel message. A visible but not imposing Church, healthy but not arrogant, ready to be seen and heard in the market place with a recognised stance on serious issues, but merciful and patient for those who in their own conscience see life and the world differently. Let the Church be alive and a place where those who were brought up on Rosary devotion and good piety can feel fully at home, as those who stand in awe of the Cosmic Christ can feel as much members as anyone else in spite of quite different understandings. Saint Thomas (Aquinas) and the Breton peasant are both on square one! Let the Church be able to humbly accept and proclaim the Mystery of all this and the wonderful message of the Incarnation which gives us one to see and touch (1 Jn 1)—amongst the galaxies we are small cheese, but to the Father of Jesus, all the details count and it is no deal for all to be fully known and loved. Even our sins are not beyond loving forgiveness (if we met Jesus in the street how do we think he would greet and treat us?). A living force with less emphasis on doctrine (our comprehension can vary even within the definitions) and a living with the sheep's smell and the Gospel words and meanings. May the Trinity of love guide us so this work is Theirs.</p>
<p>I believe God is calling us to be more focused on contemporary issues, working together with other faiths and non-believers.</p>
<p>I believe God is asking all of us to believe He really exists. Not just with our mouths, but with our whole being.</p>
<p>He wants us to go back to the scriptures as we have become too focused on tradition, ceremony, dogma etc. Young people see no attraction whatsoever towards the Church. However, they do have a deep and strong spirituality which needs to be tapped into. Our Church has become irrelevant for a progressive and socially aware young generation. As Einstein said, "Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result is the definition of insanity".</p>
<p>To study and understand our Faith and Traditions, and not go off doing our own thing. Many people want to be Politically Correct and not upset the minority. In doing that, they are causing many to walk away from the Church.</p>

We are asked to respond to changed understandings of what it means to be a human person. Also, to go beyond law in finding solutions that are inclusive and do not marginalise. The COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP ...

God is asking us as a whole "Come back to me with all your hearts". There is not enough passion and commitment in us Catholics following the teachings given to us in the Bible by Jesus (and even the prophets in the Old Testament) and God wants to invite all of us young and old back into relationship with him to know Him as He truly is, to Love Him with heart, soul and mind and to serve Him (to give without counting the cost), only Him.

In light of what we have understood of "Ad Gentes", the Second Vatican Council's decree is on missionary activity—to proclaim the Gospel to all men. The responses are: - Asking me to be a person of hope for others in my ministry, community, and parish. To be present to people, I don't always agree with and not be negative towards them. Be present and hope filled in my relationships with my own family members when I am with them. - To be able to speak clearly about social and religious issues that are in the media and try to put the perspective of what Jesus wants of us. - To know more about the Gospel, we have to trust God. Try to discover what my purpose in life is. Trust God to lead our life which can get confusing at times. - Encourage prayer which is most important. - Read the Bible. Ask God to send His Holy Spirit to enlighten me. - As the head of the family to teach the children about Jesus, make sure the family attends Sunday Mass, talk about God in our daily life. - At work, let my colleagues know I am a Catholic by my work ethic. Being open about my faith to colleagues and my patients. - In Australia, being able to practice my faith freely. Being an example at home to my family and children and at work as well. - God is asking of us to understand His word which is in the Gospel and Bible and in the context of the present-day situation as may prevail in the country and nation we live i.e. in light of the social, cultural and political environment. - We are to evangelise and enlighten others about salvation which is attainable by doing the right things e.g. keeping the commandments. - We are to respect non-Catholics who have not been aware of the goodness of the Word. - We are to be charitable and help those in need. Be an example of walking in the footsteps of the Lord which will bring people, youth and children to want to move in the same direction. - I have never discovered how "I" can spread the Gospel. It is not enough to live a life loving God and to seize any opportunity to encourage others to follow Christ. - The Religious had a way of spreading God's will on the mission field and in schools—now we have no Religious. - I personally am of the opinion that all of us are called to preach the Good News/be examples of Christ and be people who can send the message of who we are and what we stand for by our words/actions and not to have double standards i.e. practice what we preach instead of "Do what I say but don't do what I do". - We have discussed a lot of what we expect of the Clergy/priests/Nuns, etc. but we must remember that they have submitted their lives to God and they are answerable for their actions to Him. But "Ad Gentes" is like telling us of what is expected of us and if all of us take this on board, we will be like little Christs and make this world a better place to live in.

A list of the issues raised: Priests—servants to others. The bishops do not understand the common Catholic; they need to get out of their ivory towers. Local governance through parish councils, active reporting and with women in authority. The Church in Australia needs to encourage young people to participate and give them good guidance when they do. To develop a theological anthropology that fits the gospels and is appropriate to men and women of our times. We are not listening to the disengaged. To develop a contemplative spirituality that enables us to experience God as mystery and love, rather than always limiting God to our doctrines. A bit more joy and merciful in outlook, open to the 'outcast' and welcoming. Act on Child sex abuse—follow the recommendations and see it through. Stop separating social justice from the Gospel, as though it is of lesser value. Too many priests are lazy. Homilies need to be more relevant to the life of today, short and to the point; too long and people lose interest. To end clericalism and return service as the prime motive for priestly ministry. Priests to be more accepting of how people respond and not be high and mighty. Too many of our teachers are not practising Catholics. The Catholic school should reflect a vision of the

kingdom—including the poor and marginalised. Christians of all denominations need to come together parishes should offer the opportunity for scripture sharing groups. The Church should be a voice for Christians. The focus: We think God is asking the Church for better formation for priests than they are receiving now. We see some of the following as issues in the formation of priests that don't help the faith community: They need to be able to deliver a good homily—one that is based on the readings of the day, connects to people's lives, isn't waffle or about the priest's pet likes and dislikes, and isn't condemnatory of people—where love and grace hold the primary place they do in the Gospel. The Sunday Mass homily is surely a primary responsibility of a priest—it is the main way that the congregation is fed spiritually. The group could not understand why priests do not work at this more than they appear to do. Even studying carefully the sections on homilies in Pope Francis' *The Joy of the Gospel* would help them. What sort of training do they get on this in seminaries? It doesn't appear to be effective. What ongoing education are they required to do? Priests should have the sort of formation that enables them to connect with people rather than them assuming to be so removed and so much holier than ordinary people. They should be able to relate socially and on an even par with people so they can hear what people really think. The leaders of the Church seem to live in ivory towers. This seems very different to how Jesus was. Are priests engaged in today's world?

I think God is asking all priests to live their vocations. If they believe and live out their vocations, the youth will have respect and follow their faith.

To listen to the voice of the people. John XXIII spoke of an *aggiornamento*. We have been treading water since then. The Institutional Church is still attempting to shoehorn the Church (its people) into its dogma rather than listening and reconciling the Institutional Church with its people; the true Church.

I think God is asking us to ask bishops to bravely take steps to end the male hierarchy that is the basic and sinful structure of the Catholic Church. God is asking us to urge Catholic bishops in Australia to take the LEAD in introducing women into leadership positions in the Church. Women could be cardinals. Why are they not? I think God is asking us to ask bishops to stop being frightened of women and the light they would shine on their decisions if allowed a voice. I think God is asking us to urge bishops to educate and support women in the Church to understand WHY it is necessary to de-clericalise the Church. I have noticed women in our parish want to support the scandal that is the preference for male leadership in our Church. We are ALL "the baptised" and therefore all should be equal in the eyes of God. I think God is asking us to show the hierarchy how embarrassing it is for us to witness male clergy, and only male clergy, clothed richly, standing in physical elevated positions, wearing ridiculous hats and rings and jewellery, and using archaic ridiculous titles and accepting privileges at functions and when gathered for meetings—and for this Plenary—at the end of the process. I think God would be asking all the baptised, "Would Jesus be wearing rich vestments and silly hats to impress people if Jesus was with us today?" Jesus left the temple and went into the desert with John the Baptist. I think God would be asking us to admit that our hierarchy actually images those in scripture who were career people and the butt of Jesus criticism in scripture. Above all, right now I think God is calling us to urge our Catholic bishops to justly admit their sins of abuse and of covering up abuse and justly pay those who have suffered clerical child abuse promptly. I think God would urge the baptised to acknowledge that It is a scandal for Catholics that today, 07/12/2018, on the news it was announced that the Catholic Church has NOT joined the process decided upon by the recent Royal Commission. I think God is asking the baptised to perceive our bishops as sinful when they seem to be hoping the victims of child abuse will die before they have to pay up. I think God is asking the Catholic hierarchy (not the Church faithful members) to give up their addiction to money, career expectations and power over others. I think God is asking bishops to LEAD the faithful in protesting about violence to women in the Church itself and for those, like refugees, who are suffering. We need leadership, not pious prayer and more Masses. I think God is asking us to demand meaningful scripture-based homilies in our liturgies. I think God is asking for many more of the baptised to be trained and employed as preachers and considered as valid

preachers during liturgies. I think that God is asking us to demand that priests who CANNOT speak fluent English in an understandable accent be denied the privilege of giving homilies during liturgies.
To explore the possibility of priests marrying.
A Church that is to be non-judgemental and open to all; a prayerful; a discerning Church that listens to all. Liberal in doing things and not so focused on being dogmatic—and not slaves to the rituals and rigid rules. A supportive Church particularly of the clergy/religious during this time post-Royal Commission. Re-examine the vow of celibacy with consideration of options of choice.
Being an inclusive Church—welcoming all (religious, gender, culture, philosophical views); not being judgemental; respective diverse faiths Guided by the Holy Spirit—praying for guidance. Using the Church as a sacred space and respecting it as a place of worship. We are in a competitive environment—lifestyle differences. Communication—having the facts and being respectful and dignified in correcting errors/ misconceptions. Hierarchy of the Church—integrity to the roles of clergy. Concern for the younger generation in understanding the Tradition of the Church—parents engaging / teaching their children in the faith Tradition. Being a genuinely welcoming Church / parishes—where all are accepted.
God is asking us to explain the Gospel to people, now a majority in Australia, who have actively decided that they believe that there is no God. They reject any form of "religious" language. We have to find a new way of expressing the Gospel in terms that they can relate to. See my longer submission in the attached document.
A discernment of leadership needs in the Church of Australia which is open to shared leadership structures. Clericalism is needs addressing in this regard. The Church's message is not seen as Good News so we need to start with the Good News, with Jesus' praxis. We need to look at the focus of our teaching in light of Jesus' words and practice.
Treat everyone equally. Uphold the dignity of everyone. Walk along with everyone and their faith journey and be respectful of their individual faith journey. Show compassion to those in need.
God is calling for unity. Namely in the capacity of equality and equal opportunity. It is time the Church took the advice of Jesus and left judgement to God and worked on ensuring people in minorities and women are treated as well as those who are males.
Tolerance: Remember that it is not our job to judge those around us. We should support and accept as Jesus did.
Be accepting of other cultural beliefs. Treat others as you would like to be treated. Care for all the environment.
For us to be more tolerant and loving to everyone in our community.
Be fair and welcoming to those seeking asylum.
To love those who need it. We need a real push towards reconciliation and caring for others.
God is asking for society to reflect Jesus to others by showing compassion to others and helping members of the community in need. At this time, we are being called to show kindness and forgiveness to others in a society where judgement and criticism is high.
* Understanding between different cultures * Keeping the faith * Refugee issue.
Asking for tolerance and inclusivity—welcoming others into our community. Living in peace together without judgement, affording the same opportunities to others that we have been lucky enough to have by being born in Australia.
To be more tolerant and accepting of others in our communities to accept the differences of each individual and celebrate them.
To renew the Church and to find ways to share the Good News in ways that connect with young people who have been brought up in a modern world where the message we have is so often presented as counter-cultural.
Listen to the voice of youth. Catch up to the 21st century. Look after all people. Show empathy and compassion.
Love in Action.

God is, as always, asking us to act with justice and preserve the dignity of all people, but I feel He is also asking us to modernize our approach and remember to act as Jesus did—not to get caught up in the politics and legalities, and to think about the good of humankind.
To respect the dignity of all humans, despite their background, race or culture. To be of service to the community by giving to those less fortunate than ourselves. To be accepting of all people, despite what we see and hear in the media about certain religious groups.
Honesty, Treating each other with dignity and respect, A call back to Church.
To be strong people of moral substance who can stand up to the challenges that the 21st century presents us.
I feel we are confused as a society and are pressured to respond in a "PC" manner to everything. Options are being diminished and genuine conversation is being cut off before anyone can enter in to and develop a thought process. Far left-wing types are ambushing and dictating agenda and influencing media and public opinion. I think God wants us to be thinkers and influencers, but in a way that promotes thought and the rights of others. We need to be open and not shut down discourse, even if we don't like hearing it as it is only a minority that takes it to the extreme.
1. Paying more attention to the word of God. 2. Media causing harm by influencing negatively. 3. More cultural awareness. 4. Constant destruction of the environment. Can be averted by planting trees in schools (Arbor day). 5. Harmony Day to include harmony with nature. 6. Lack of value of the human person by desensitisation of respect and dignity. 7. Domestic violence. 8. Pressure in modern society impacts upon mental health.
Acceptance and tolerance of all people, regardless of differences, but being true to the spirit of the Catholic Church. Continued option for the poor, but in preventative as well as responsive ways.
Address the priesthood and the child abuse within. Reintroduce Jesus into Christian holidays (Easter, Christmas). Continue to lead by example by assisting the poor and unfortunate, as Jesus did during his ministry. Continue to be part of moral and ethical discussion, despite the slings and lashes from those groups who, ironically, claim to be inclusive. Clean the image of the Catholic Church to one that would be appealing to the community (sustainability, tolerance), without compromising beliefs and values.
To be accepting of others and to stop judging others for their circumstances or life choices.
To treat everyone with equality and embrace diversity and difference.
Accept differences, embrace diversity—it is a constantly evolving world and we need to keep up with it rather than clinging to our past patterns (migrants, LGBT community, etc.).
To be inclusive of all backgrounds and accepting of anyone wanting to join the Church. To teach the word of God in a way that involves people of all ages including children.
- Model/teach in a way that children will understand and respond to. - Encourage children to report back to their families. - To include everyone no matter their religion or background.
Inclusivity of all genders, culture, etc. God would want us to take the teachings and make them more relevant for today so that they are relevant. Compassionate of the needs of all.
To create unity amongst different people, cultures and beliefs. To assist the increasing number of vulnerable people.
To support, care and be kind to others, regardless of colour or race. He would want unity in the world.
Unity. Accepting differences within our communities. Harmony, peace within our country.
I believe he is asking for everybody to be opened minded and accepting of all who want to be part of the Catholic faith.
To be inclusive of all families and individuals and to nurture the younger generation. To give young people a sense of belonging and purpose and a feeling of community and safety. To give those who struggle assistance and a soft place to fall. To help vulnerable children, the needy and the sick. To instil morals and values in our young people.

As a Catholic community, we need to spread the teachings, word and love of God to the broader community. We need to evangelise initially through our actions and interactions with all we come across. We need to live our faith without fear.
To help people in need.
Be more forgiving, Accept cultural differences, Be more prayerful, Importance of family.
To embrace our differences and diversity.
I feel that God is asking us to be open to all. God is a God of love and hope and as a Church, we need to show love and hope to all. We, as a Church, need to be more open minded and accepting of all from all walks of life, lifestyles, and life choices. The people of the Church have changed, times and changed and now the Church needs to change. This will help the Church in reaching out to evangelise people.
There needs to be change with the attitude of the Church and others. That we must include all background regardless of their lifestyle choice. We also need to go back to the basics teaching our students in Catholic school the gospel values in a more child friendly way.
Draw people to the Church. Care for God's creation. Be inclusive. Show God's love to all that we come in contact with. Protect human life. Care for the poor and marginalised.
To be more open when bad things happen, such as the paedophilia issue, resulting in loss of faith and drop in attendance in Church/Mass. No apology for the paedophilia on the part of some clergy. However, the general public at large, Catholics as well as others, do not fully know about the apologies rendered and corrective measures taken to stop or minimise the paedophilia issue.
Australian Catholic priests should love the sacraments of Eucharist and reconciliation and promote and encourage the faithful to do the same.
I feel that God is asking us to be much more open and honest in our response to the teachings in the Gospels. I feel that a lot of lip service is offered to the teachings of the Gospels but very little actual practice to those teachings. The main complaint I have is the Churches' attitude to manifesting God's love as represented in St John's Gospels and also in the Second Reading of the Second Sunday in Advent. All over the Holy Scriptures, we read about God's love for us and what He wants from us in this aspect. I had a very traumatic experience in this regard and the ultimate price I paid was that after [ - ] years of loyal service to the Catholic Church in [ - ] different countries, I was stripped of all my Ministry duties for merely displaying that pure godly love to a member of the opposite sex who happened to be an Altar Server under my care. My actions were not one-sided, I did have a considerable amount of encouragement from the party in question and for all of this, I was suspended from all of my duties by Bishop [ X ] without him listening to my account of what took place. He relied on the words of a very Biased person who was not ready to listen to reason. Bishop [ X ] was not prepared to meet with me or receive correspondence from me on the subject and shut me off from receiving natural justice. However, that justice was served in the Courts and I was completely exonerated. My observation on this issue was that here I was manifesting a true Christian Love to a fellow human being with no sexual gratification whatsoever and I was literally crucified for it. Bishop [ X ] acted in an absolutely unchristian fashion in preventing me from natural justice and a chance to explain my actions. He relied on a biased report from a second party and deprived me of the chance to justify and explain my actions. This to me is a total lack of God's Love to a fellow human and more like the actions of a dictator. I pray that he is able to live with his actions, as for me I have walked away from the Catholic Church which has given me ample proof that it only pays lip service to the teachings of the Gospels.
Our discussion and main conclusion: The Church needs to stop excluding women and lording it over them! Comments: Jesus didn't do that. He gave us as many 'clues' as how to include both men and women in serving and leading his people. We were given all we need to work out the equal value of men and women and their equal capacity to represent Christ. We thought that the obstacles to including women in ordained ministry don't come from the scriptures or from the example Jesus gave us, just the good old-fashioned vested interests of human power. The group observed that In the archdiocese of [ - ] our parishes are nearly all led by priests who are from second and third world

<p>counties, who are from the Neocatechumenate way, from the Salvatorian Religious order or who are newly ordained; these men are generally very protective of their superior male priestly right. They often barely know how to relate to adult women, let alone hear them, take them seriously and include them. The group believed the direction the Church was taking in this fundamental area of who we are as men and women and who can minister in God's name did not reflect the will of God. The young people in the group said they did not find these models of exclusive, dominating male leadership psychologically sound. They felt that priestly ministry seems to be attracting men who might find this appealing because of their own emotional, personality or sexual problems. We hope the Church leadership listens to what the Spirit is saying. Both young and old in the group find it hard to understand the Church's theology and the type of distinction it makes between men and women. Doesn't baptism make us all a new creation, because we have put on Christ?</p>
<p>Bring healing to the Church community. Spread the Gospel message to the whole Australian community Make my people disciples not spectators. Make my Church a welcoming place for all people, do not exclude anyone. Don't overburden my priests. Restructure/re-organize/enlist the laity to do the everyday tasks so that priests can minister their people. Decision-making should be more consultative of the laity.</p>
<p>The message has not changed: "go out and make disciples of all peoples". This activity needs to be at the heart of all the Church does and the main focus of its energies and financial resources. The Catholic Church is very good at ministering to the sick, the poor and the marginalized and very average at creating real disciples. While these works of mercy are a way of showing God's love for his people, a more proactive carrying of the gospel message is also needed. It would be interesting to initiate a "time and motion" study of the Church's activity and expenditure to see exactly where our real priorities lie and determine if our true priorities match our professed mission. This is what any large organization does to ensure that it is keeping on task. Is the Catholic Church on task? Looking from the inside, it doesn't appear to be.</p>
<p>We believe that God is asking to make the Mass more people friendly and inviting to all. As a group, we find Mass at the moment too long and irrelevant for our daily lives in the 21st century. We believe change is necessary in order for the whole community to be more involved and attend Mass more regularly. We believe the homily is too long and vague. It needs to be more relevant to our daily lives. We believe singing the responses is outdated and the type of music needs to be more upbeat and inspiring, such as Hillsong.</p>
<p>We believe that the Church needs to be more diverse in its beliefs. In order for the numbers to increase, it needs to cater for the vast range of ages, cultures and genders that attend Church each weekend.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be accepting of all people regardless of race, gender and sexual preference. It's important for the Catholic Church to recognise that times have changed and all people are entitled to a full relationship with God without suffering Catholic guilt.</p>
<p>For us to start believing in the Church once again. We need to start looking back at our faith and for the Church to gain trust from the people. Churches need to start listening to the people as a whole community rather than making decisions on their own. The world is changing so the Church needs to start changing with the world to become more relevant in your lives.</p>
<p>God is asking us to reconsider and adjust our views of marriage through empathy and acceptance of diversity in relationships. This includes: 1. Marriage being a union (same sex) 2. Civil ceremonies, seen as a marriage in the Catholic Church? 3. Annulments—clarification of when necessary/process e.g. is it necessary when married in civil ceremonies? 4. Children of diverse relationships e.g. acceptance into the Church as well as Catholic schools and communities 5. How this affects teachings of marriage and relationships.</p>
<p>To have a conversation bringing the Church into the 21st century. In order for it to survive, grow and prosper.</p>
<p>To make the youth of Australia more involved in the Church and to understand what it means to be Catholic. Make being Catholic relevant to their lives.</p>

To think of ways in which we can engage younger people in their parish. Better relationships between parish and families. Make Mass more engaging and accessible for all ages and new age. Questioning whether priests should marry.
To stay strong in our faith in the turbulent world by taking action and standing up for Christ. Foster faith in our children by providing inclusive, entertaining, engaging, relevant fun events other than Mass.
God wants is to live by the two great commandments of Jesus. - by becoming engaged in our own faith and then evangelising - becoming more ecumenical - more of a focus on the community - come one, come all.
Be the best person you can be, Tolerance, Give a helping hand, Pause before reacting, See the real person.
Recovery, Commitment and to encourage growth and youth to participate and be more active, Recommitment, to be accessible and relevant.
To respect each other, to learn from the past, to forgive, learn to lean on God's support, to be like the Rainbow Fish.
To take into consideration the state of the environment to become sustainable and care for the earth and what we have as we only have one.
God is asking us to cater for the youth of today to encourage participation in the future of the Church.
To keep up with the progressive changes in our world. To embrace technology, using social media to connect with people and more media in Church services to engage youth.
To be accepting of all people, their belief and culture. To support those that need additional help spiritually. To bring younger members into the Church, through school interaction.
Evangelise the community, bring the youth into the Church, be courageous, be tolerant, be patient and treat everyone kindly.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be accepting of refugees and to attempt to understand the hardship of others from other countries. To show empathy and truly acknowledge the difficulties others face when they seek safety in Australia</li> <li>• To work hard for the community we live in, to fully engage with the community in work and in a voluntary capacity</li> <li>• To be a part of the community of the Church that we live in, and to raise our children to know their community.</li> </ul>
I think that he is asking us to continue in Jesus' footsteps, be more accepting of others, have faith and hope in him and make his mission more relevant to the next generation.
Peace, Reconciliation, Harmony, Tolerance, Acceptance, Valuing the contribution of others, A Catholic community that is self-serving. There is no respect shown for loyalty or service. Churches and parishes struggle to keep the faithful when they witness others, working under the guise of Catholicism, abuse and use their power for their own purposes.
God is asking us to embrace the plight of all. We need to reflect on how inclusive we really are as a nation—whether we are driven by compassion, as Jesus was, or whether we are 'all talk,' and simply driven by profit. God is calling us to readjust our priorities; people not money. We need to make all decisions in a spirit of compassion. Finally, God is calling us to be forgiving. Not once, twice, but as many times as it takes.
To embrace youth and create opportunities for youth to be part of the Catholic Church at parish level. To allow women to take up leadership roles in the Church—including priest, bishop and Pope.
God is asking us to formally acknowledge and accept through Catholic law all people regardless of sexual orientation, relationship status and living situation in the Catholic community.
To stand up for those who have no voice. To stand up and speak out for those who cannot. There are so many people suffering in this world and seeking refuge from war and other dangers. It is our responsibility to help all those in need. As a community, we also need to continue to grow and adapt as the world changes. We need to give women equal rights and responsibilities within the Church. To allow women to attain leadership positions within the Church so that all members of the Church can

<p>have an equal voice. We also need to open the doors of the Church and be more welcoming of youth and non-traditional family structures.</p>
<p>Bring youth to a Church that is traditional but relevant. Explain and encourage a deep love for traditional devotions i.e. rosary, novenas. Explain the faith! We need a series of videos that explain the faith in detail that is Australian, relatable and doesn't hold back on Church teaching. This needs to be made available to teachers and students alike. The youth of today want truth—they want substance—they need more than the everyday happy-clappy.</p>
<p>God is asking us to reengage with our youth and to inspire our youth to be witnesses of the faith. Many people find Religious Education and Mass boring, because they do not truly understand why Catholics do things a certain way or understand what is happening. We need to explain the faith!! We need to open our hearts to the less fortunate people of Australia. We need to remain firm on our moral beliefs and not give into secular thought. It's so important to place emphasis on the sacraments and how they are the source and summit of our faith and spiritual nourishment. People don't understand that however ...</p>
<p>To listen and be still to the Holy Spirit. To embrace change and to include all people. To a deep listening and taking the time to reflect and pray. To remember God as the source of life and to care deeply for all Australians.</p>
<p>I believe God wants us to be true to our morals as a national community in a time when intolerance is becoming acceptable in politics across the world. I believe God wants us to see through POLARISING media that only feeds us information that agrees with our point of view and doesn't give people all sides of an argument to make intelligent and informed decisions. I believe God wants us to value our environment over the financial gain and social benefit of the privileged.</p>
<p>God is asking me to be a witness of God's love. I have found that there are people out in the world/our community that are searching for God's word, love and forgiveness. My role is to provide a guiding hand to those people to find God by what I do, say and practice in my faith. The Church needs to become a community of faith and to hold firm in our faith and beliefs if we are to stay true to the teaching of our faith.</p>
<p>God is asking that we walk in His footsteps, pass on His word, are proud to be Catholic, encourage children and others to develop their own faith, and to be forgiving.</p>
<p>God is asking us at this time, to be more accepting of others. Their uniqueness, opinions, actions, behaviours, experiences and beliefs.</p>
<p>To be more accepting of others, their lifestyles and choices. To reflect on our current practices and be critical and honest. To make our religion more real to everyone—make our mission and values real and reflect real life experiences. Re-evaluate what community is, what it means and what it looks like.</p>
<p>To encourage the youth to have Jesus in their lives and live as he taught. To reach out to the homeless and those who are 'lost' with mental issues and spiritually. To be open and accepting of others regardless of background, race or religion. To slow down the pace of life, put down the technology—listen to each other and connect more with others face to face.</p>
<p>Simplify our lives and focus on faith, family, friends and wider community. This also means the Church and Mass need to be simplified making it more family friendly and the priest engaging in a simple, meaningful way with the young people and families. The language and vocabulary of the Mass, where possible needs to be relevant to the people of today so it is easily understood by the young and old and not just the congregation parroting meaninglessly. Homilies need to make a connection between the gospel and our lives and be succinct.</p>
<p>Love one another, follow in God and Jesus' footsteps, forgiveness and forget, respect one another.</p>
<p>To keep the faith and manage change to provide positive relationships between ourselves, each other and God and what place community, Church and family play in a rapidly evolving world, which is becoming secular at an exponential rate.</p>
<p>God is asking us to: Show love for others and inclusiveness regardless of sexual orientation, preference, race, religion, etc.</p>

To reconnect with our children communally, also helping them to re-sacralise with nature and the outdoors. We need to develop programs (as a society) where parents/guardians are giving time to run various clubs and discussion groups with the children.
I believe that the Church is asking us to be more compassionate to all, to live like Jesus, showing love for one another, equality and justice for those less fortunate. To be an all-inclusive, loving and modern Church, reflective of the social standings in today's society. To be more understanding and to show greater tolerance. God is here for all of us, not how to exclude us. Make us proud to be a people of faith and remove shame surrounding religion in Australia.
We believe modernising the Church is of high importance. It is crucial that people of all ages (especially young people) maintain their engagement with the Church throughout their lives. Engaging young individuals through modern songs, use of technology, inclusive/relevant topics, hands-on/entertaining activities.
God is asking for Transparency and trust of the Church. The Church community needs to be open and accepting of all people in our modern society. Acceptance involves age, gender, race, life preferences (same-sex marriage, living arrangements etc.). In a modern world, people are struggling to make connections of how the Church can enrich their lives.
A need to update to survive in the modern age. For example, updating rules surrounding inclusivity, internally within the Church and regarding the wider community. To be open minded and focus on making the Church more engaging and accessible to youth. More compassion and involvement towards those in need.
Acceptance of all people regardless of race, religion etc. Being respectful of everyone. Spreading love to all.
This is the report of a sub-group of the Plenary Council Meeting on 18th November 2018 at [ - ], [ - ]. The subject here is God. What we think God is asking of us in Australia was rephrased as "What God wants from us and of us in Australia". We therefore have to discern the voice of God from our personal desires for pleasure, freedom and have things our way. Given that there are many views, opinion and preferences, there is a need for a reference point/standard. Just like many other organisations and societies, with constitution, guidelines and protocols, the standard provides a guide for direction and boundary settings especially when there are many diverse views. The Standards that we all accepted and recognized, as Catholic Christians, are the Bible and the tradition of the Church (John 14:6 ... 'I Am the way, the truth and life, no one comes to the father except through me'; and Matt 7:15–20 ... be on your guard against false prophets; they come to you looking like sheep on the outside but ... ).
We believe God is asking us to communicate and collaborate.
1. More community-based events to allow people to gather and connect. 2. Distribution of authority within a parish 3. Acceptance of diversity (e.g. women leaders).
To act on climate. To reform the Church to make it more modern and relevant.
To act with conscience. Be accepting of all regardless of faith.
We believe God is asking for us to be more inclusive and less discriminatory of others. Expressing more compassion but at the same time maintaining the faith and values that hold true to the Catholic Church. There is a way to ensure we uphold the faith while we show compassion to others and we need to ensure the faith isn't diminished and the Catholic values disappear.
Justice. Sharing and collaboration. Reconnection. Reshaping/redesigning the Church. Faith.
To spread the word by deeds and acts by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the prisoner and comforting the lonely. To build communities that are inclusive of all not just the in crowd of regular Church attendees.
To be brave enough to speak out for the truth.
To show more compassion towards asylum seekers, particularly children.
'To act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God' (Micah 6:8). This can be further expressed with a missionary and pastoral focus that is inclusive and respectful, recognising that we all have equal inherent/God-given dignity and worth: 'There are no more distinctions between Jew

<p>and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28). I believe God calls us to be proclaimers of 'good news' so we can be hope-filled and passionate/joyous to transform our nation for the better. As St Mother Teresa so succinctly stated: "Faith in action is love—and love in action is service". We also need to recognise that as global citizens within communities of faith, we have responsibilities for others as well, for our neighbours—always prioritising those on the margins. This can be further expressed as being members of one human family. Through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching and Integral Ecology more specifically, and by 'reading the signs of the times', care for our common home is also urgently required. This can be demonstrated through social justice or climate justice actions that acknowledge the call for intergenerational solidarity and justice that is inclusive of peace-making practices; that is, Gospel non-violence and just peace. 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called children of God' (Matthew 5: 9).</p>
<p>To avail more (connected) formation opportunities for the adults, as well as our young parishioners.</p>
<p>The word 'us' in the Q has many interpretations Have considered Q on basis of Personal, Church Community (parish) and Church Hierarchy.          Under Personal: Not in any order. To love—respect self, neighbour, and stranger. To bear witness: To be charitable: To pray, To take responsibility and To act: Don't give up.          For parish, Be more visible in our community: Be sustainable (\$, spiritual and community).          Under Hierarchy; Get off the back foot and be more visible in positive light: Rebuild the Church image from its current perception position.</p>
<p>1—To forgive and begin a new journey moving forward. To acknowledge that there has been wrongs in the past and that this is the process to move forward with a more cohesive Church.          2—That the Church is not perfect and is open to change for the betterment of its followers.          3—To come together as one—one person, one faith, one belief ...          4—To revisit the core beliefs of the Church the purpose of why we exist and to create an environment where future followers will be engaged and see the Church in a purposeful manner.          5—To give purpose of the Church to its new followers in the modern world—to give a new hope and faith.</p>
<p>21st century relevance and the need to not focus on materialistic things as the be all and end all.</p>
<p>God is asking for us to come together as a community and live together in peace and harmony.</p>
<p>He or she is wanting us to be more caring towards others; more inclusive and more brave to stand up in the face of injustice. Not just in Australia but for international human rights too.</p>
<p>God is asking what Jesus' message continues to ask of all of us. Acceptance, love and understanding. What God is asking in Australia at this time has not changed, what needs to change is the interpretation of the messages of Jesus and how these messages can guide the community of today.</p>
<p>I think what God is asking us is to continue our beliefs in the God and the Church but I think the Church needs to make some changes.</p>
<p>I feel God is asking us to bridge the gap between our faith/Church beliefs and our daily life/culture. Our faith life and belief doesn't always gel with Church beliefs. In our daily lives, we have a healthy representation of male and female. Any media presentation by the Catholic Church is male predominant and this seriously needs to change. Our celebration of the Mass in parishes needs to have different models on offer such as a quiet Mass with no or little music and a short homily. Other Masses could have lively music with video clips of movies or reflection on a current news article that relates to the gospel message. Could we have some outside Masses or an option of moving around during the homily, etc? I believe the Church needs to review its teaching on divorce and celebration of the sacraments, marriages outside a Church building, married priests and male only priests. Can we not frown or look down on our culture but journey with it? Can we work towards getting young families involved and providing them an alternative to their desire for materialism? I pray for the council and thank you for reading this.</p>

I think God is always wanting His Catholic Church to Make Jesus Real in our actions of love and charity to all ... whatsoever you do to the least ... but for me I want that to be using the Church as my source of power that enables me to be Christ to all. Without judgement and with only love.

To live like Jesus. In 2018, this looks and feels very different to times before us. Therefore, worship is going to be very different too, to the last 2000 years.

God is asking us to return to basics. 1. Frequenting the sacraments. 2. Studying and reflecting the Word of God with open and loving hearts. 3. More sustained periods of contemplative communal prayer within the Church Liturgy. 4. Less compromise in the interpretation of Christ's teachings. 5. A greater devotion to our Lady. 6. A communal Church consecration to the Immaculate Heart and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. 7. Powerful Liturgical Music which combines both classics and meaningful contemporary pieces. 8. More references to the Saints and how they overcame their struggles. 9. Greater significance given to the role of Angels and their role in our lives as Catholics.

I feel the Church needs to move forward with great tenderness and love yet without compromising the teachings of Christ. We need to return to our traditional foundations whilst also incorporating the new and dynamic. A greater zeal for our traditional foundations whilst encouraging a communal consecration to our Lord and Our Lady. God bless your discernment!

In our parish, we broke up into three groups to discuss the central question of the Plenary Council. As a result, three separate sets of answers came up. Because all groups had a segment on the youth, the issues to do with the youth were extracted and formed into one separate submission. In fairness to all groups, it is felt necessary to enter their submissions untouched. Hence, due to limitations on the number of words and characters, this parish is making two submissions. GROUP 1 • The Church in Australia needs to find ways in which to make itself RELEVANT to everyday life. The homilies, in particular, ought to show how the Gospel relates to today's life. • The elements of the Mass, especially in its language, needs to be modernised so that the story of the Lord's Supper is made meaningful. • Parishes and parish priests should be allowed an amount of autonomy to 'shape' the Eucharist according to the needs of their respective congregations. • There is a perception that the Church is judgemental, especially in matters to do with relationships (same-sex relationships; premarital sex; divorce, practice of contraception in ways not prescribed by the Church). The Church in Australia needs to find a way in which people in situations like these are made to feel included and not feel like the lepers of Jesus' time—shunned by the 'righteous'. • Signs abound in Australia of the priestly vocation becoming a profession. In addition to the theological training priests should be also trained to respond to the human needs of their flock. There are some priests who appear to have lost the ability to see the human situation in front of them. The purity and the sacredness of the Church are more important than the wellbeing and dignity of the human person. GROUP 2 • The Church is being called to be more tolerant and accepting of others. • The Church is being called to facilitate and make resources available to help families to understand the Catholic Catechism and be able to pass on this knowledge. • The Church is being called to recognise that the earthly well-being of people is as important as the spiritual wellbeing. • The Church is being called to reach out—to everyone, but especially to the disabled, the elderly and those in need.

In our parish, we broke up into three groups to discuss the central question of the Plenary Council. As a result, three separate sets of answers came up. The issues to do with youth were extracted and formed into one separate submission. In fairness to all groups, it is felt necessary to enter their submissions untouched. Hence, due to limitations on the number of words and characters, this parish is making two submissions. This is our second of two submissions. GROUP 3

STRATEGIC

- o Have a strategic plan to support the youth of Australia become hopeful and positive.
- o Become more visible in the treatment of refugees

LOCAL

- o Have a support base for families attached to the parish in times of crisis
- o Hold regular prayer meetings
- o Support outreach to any disadvantaged members of the local communities

- o Hold combined Christian events outside in addition to Carols each year.
- o Support palliative care agencies and the youth
- o Tackle the problem of ‘clericalism’ in the Church by greater empowerment of the Laity, i.e., entrusting more responsibility to the laity for Church leadership and decision-making at both diocesan and parish level—not just a consultative or advisory role.
- o Improve the Church’s ‘public image’ in an increasingly secular and anti-Church society by:
  - § better PR and more effective use of media to highlight the Church’s many positive elements. E.g.: Employ more lay (not just clerical) media experts; more self-promotion by publicising the many good works of the Church in society (in health, education, aged and palliative care, migrants and refugees, social outreach etc.).
  - § integrating itself better into the community. Community days and weeks (e.g.: mental health week, NAIDOC week, Day of Persons with disabilities, etc.) need to be recognised by the Church as being important and inclusive.
- o Rediscover and reaffirm the Vatican Council’s focus on the essential nature and mission of the Church as a sign and instrument of salvation in the world—a missionary and evangelising Church.
- o Review Catholic Education and seek ways to make it more effective in the formation of our youth in the Catholic Faith.

#### YOUTH

- The Church in Australia needs to find ways in which to make itself RELEVANT to everyday life—especially in ways that will find acceptance among the young.
- The Church is being called to reach out in a very special way to the young.
- The Church needs to devise a strategic plan to support the youth of Australia become hopeful and positive.
- The Catholic Church needs to become more appealing to the youth.
- There are some basic questions regarding the youth that need to be asked and need to be answered:
  - o Why are congregations made up of the older generation (apart from those linked directly to schools)?
  - o What would assist our youth in finding solace and friendship in parish communities?
  - o Why do so many Catholic students from Catholic Colleges and Universities stop practising their faith once they are in their own homes?

To see that our freedom to express our faith and beliefs at schools especially Catholic schools appears to be diminishing.

What can be done to reach out to others?

To make Christ present in practical ways to others.

- ∅ Teach about the universal call to all practising Catholic Christians to personal holiness i.e. to become a saint
- o to prioritise the loving, obeying, enjoying and serving the one true God—the Triune God
- o to prioritise the loving of neighbour, that is, evangelisation of the secular world, leading to the salvation of souls, the conversion of sinners, and courageous defence of the faith with apologetics.
- ∅ Fight for the legal protection of freedom of religion in Australia i.e. for the orthodox teachings and practices of the Catholic Christian Church
- ∅ Fight for the legal protection of free speech in Australia i.e. for the orthodox teachings and practices of the Catholic Christian Church
- ∅ better leadership from Australian Cardinals, Archbishops, bishops and priests i.e. clear unambiguous public statements in teaching and explaining matters of Faith and Morals and clear unambiguous statements which condemn all sin and vice
- ∅ One central national Catholic Seminary for the better orthodox Catholic formation of clergy and religious
- o Catholic Apologetics, giving a public defence of the Catholic Christianity
- o Christology
- o Eschatology

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Liberal Arts Curriculum</li> <li>o Orthodox Liturgy</li> <li>o Philosophy</li> <li>o Orthodox Catholic Theology</li> <li>o Virtues program</li> <li>Ø Better orthodox formation and restructuring of the staff at the Catholic Education Office (CEO), i.e. Catholic Education [ - ] ([ - ]),             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better formation of all Catholic education institutions</li> <li>• Better orthodox Catholics formation of primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary schools</li> <li>• better formation and accreditation of teachers in Catholic schools</li> </ul> </li> <li>o prevent non-practicing Catholic teachers from teaching RE (Religious Ed) and correction of any dissent from Catholic teaching             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• better formation and accreditation of students in Catholic schools</li> <li>• improve the RE (Religious Education) Curriculum</li> <li>• successful completion and passing the bishop’s Test for religious education (RE)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The Clergy (cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests) need to publicly and clearly teach against heterodoxy, heresy and errors, for example, condemning and rooting out false secular ideologies that have infiltrated the Church, including to fight against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worldly secularism</li> <li>• Secular worldly values regarding</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o premarital sex</li> <li>o the use of artificial contraception and birth control (e.g. oral contraception pill)</li> <li>o the use of pornography</li> <li>o abortion</li> <li>• Postmodernism</li> <li>• Humanism,</li> <li>• Secular Feminism, e.g. third wave feminism</li> <li>• Relativism</li> <li>• Marxism</li> <li>• Secular Socialism</li> <li>• Social Justice Warriors (SJW)</li> <li>• Communism</li> <li>• Free-Masons</li> <li>• Transgenderism</li> <li>• Gender identity ideology and absurd pronouns</li> <li>• Gender Fluidity ideology</li> <li>• So called “Same-Sex” Marriage between homosexual people</li> <li>• Pro-Homosexual movement (i.e. pro-Gay homosexual acts and culture, pro-Lesbian acts and culture)</li> <li>• Easy divorce and remarriage culture. Clearly explain teachings from Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture, Early Church Fathers, Doctors (Teachers) and Magisterium.</li> </ul>
<p>As a group we believe God is asking us to take up our everyday leadership roles as Catholics, both within the family home and within the community. The spirit has the power to work through everyone and therefore we believe that the Catholic community (Lay as well as clergy) should have a constant voice which helps to shape the Church and express the needs of all of God’s people.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ø Call to ongoing personal repentance (conversion) for every Catholic Christian</li> <li>Ø Teach about the universal call to all practicing Catholic Christians to personal holiness—living a holy life (i.e. to become a saint) o to prioritise the loving, obeying, enjoying and serving the one true God—the Triune God o to prioritise the loving of neighbour, that is, evangelisation of the secular world, leading to the salvation of souls, the conversion of sinners, and courageous defence of the faith with apologetics.</li> </ul>

- Ø Fight for the legal protection of freedom of religion in Australia i.e. for the orthodox teachings and practices of the Catholic Christian Church
  - Ø Fight for the legal protection of free speech in Australia i.e. for the orthodox teachings and practices of the Catholic Christian Church
  - Ø better leadership from Australian Cardinals, Archbishops, bishops and priests i.e. clear unambiguous public statements in teaching and explaining matters of Faith and Morals and clear unambiguous statements which condemn all sin and vice
  - Ø Adult education and outreach and evangelisation
  - Ø Financial support from the Archdiocese for advertising in every parish for CD, DVD and online multimedia Catholic teaching video programs for the home.
    - Catholic Television channels.
    - Catholic Radio stations.
    - Multimedia resources (e.g. Augustine Institute).
    - Video programs for the home.
    - Personal Catholic teaching resources.
    - EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network).
    - Bishop Robert Barron.
    - Catholic Answers radio podcasts.
    - Radio Maria.
  - Ø One-on-one encounters in personal evangelisation
  - Ø One central national Catholic Seminary for the better orthodox Catholic formation of clergy and religious
    - Catholic Apologetics, giving a public defence of the Catholic Christianity.
    - Christology.
    - Eschatology.
    - Liberal Arts Curriculum.
    - Orthodox Liturgy.
    - Philosophy.
    - Orthodox Catholic Theology.
    - Virtues program.
  - Ø Better orthodox formation and restructuring of the staff at the Catholic Education Office (CEO), i.e. Catholic Education [ - ] ([ - ]).
  - Better formation of all Catholic education institutions.
  - Better orthodox Catholics formation of primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary schools.
  - Better formation and accreditation of teachers in Catholic schools.
    - Prevent non-practicing Catholic teachers from teaching RE (Religious Ed).
    - Correction of any dissent from Catholic teaching.
  - Better formation and accreditation of students in Catholic schools.
  - Improve the RE (Religious Education) Curriculum.
  - Successful completion and passing the bishop's Test for religious education (RE).
- The Clergy (Cardinals, Archbishops, bishops and priests) need to publicly and clearly teach against heterodoxy, heresy and errors, for example, condemning and rooting out false secular ideologies that have infiltrated the Church, including to fight against:
- Worldly secularism.
  - Secular worldly values regarding
    - adultery, fornication and premarital sex.
    - the use of artificial contraception.
- more Church activities for attracting youth and unbelievers - more parent involvement to promote children's understanding of God - more outreach to all the world; each individual can share the word to their visible audience - unity of the Church should be focussed - testimonials from lay people might be often more powerful - love one another, clarify the teachings of the Lord and the Church

reasonably to all audiences regardless of age and belief. Recognised Theme: Spreading the Word of God to all - more outreach from every single believer.

God is asking for a great spiritual renewal for both individuals and the Church as a whole. There was a strong emphasis on spiritual renewal expressing a need for more retreats or seminars like the Life in the Spirit Seminars for all the Church including bishops, priests and Deacons, and parishioners. This group believed that growing in holiness and building communities is important. There was a concern for the need to stand up for our beliefs, to be courageous and not afraid so that we can be brave to speak out on issues such as same sex marriages and stand up for the beliefs of the Church rather than being railroaded by media. We believe there is a need for the bishops to be more vocal in the media on issues of social justice, Christian mores and beliefs to oppose the influence of the vocal minority in such issues as same sex marriage, euthanasia, etc. The way our faith is taught in schools is a major concern and improvements in this area are desperately needed so young people may better understand the faith. It was thought that a program similar to the RCIA should be part of the school curriculum, especially at high school level. A concern that the more conservative element in our Church is making it difficult for youth to feel welcome and that the Church should be more tolerant. We should accept young people living together as long as they behave responsibly and marriage is their ultimate goal. There was deep concern for the need to reach out to children, youth and young adults and a belief that more focus on bringing young adults back to parish involvement and the Mass is critical. More tolerance of people attending Church should be shown; people should be less critical of what the young wear to Church and encourage their attendance. The conservative element is driving the youth away from the Church. Marriage issues were also raised. The ability for people to be married outside a Church building to enable a Catholic marriage even though they are in a winery or park. Acceptance of Catholics who have previously married outside the Church or are separated or divorced should also be able to receive communion.

He is calling us to re-evangelise Australia, as also the western world. We are living amongst increasing secularisation and godlessness. The current generation is ill equipped to pass faith onto their children and it will be worse with the next generation. What has the Church got to attract people? Very little. Our public image is terrible—paedophilia issues, priests with hands in the till, etc. and within some parishes priests who defy Finance Committees and archdiocese's financial guidelines, appear to have lost their fervour for the gospel, become more local political-focused than pastoral-focused.

I truly believe that the Holy Spirit is asking us as Australians to gather together and have a greater belief and have a greater participation with our baptismal promises. We tend to get everyone baptised and priests are continually doing this (as is their commitment) but then we do not carry on after the baptism ceremony. Baptism has become a task that needs to be done if you are a Catholic and no firm commitment made to carry on this important task. I think there should be more conditions and rules put on parents if they want their child baptised and priests should have the right to not approve a baptism if he feels that the request for baptism is only in the name of "my child will get enrolment in a Catholic school". Instead of concentrating so much on the number of baptised Catholics who are not attending Mass, we should be looking at the numbers who are attending and who need nourishment and encouragement, especially the youth. So much emphasis is put on those who are not attending, but if only the ones who are attending are encouraged and empowered to go out and spread the good news, then their voices will be heard by the many thousands who are slack in their faith. There is talk of many leaders in the community who think that if we change the current ways of the Church, more people will attend Mass. If we do that, then what have we got—a man-made Church with followers who changes when the wind blows. I have heard people in high positions mention some topics that the young adults want the Church to review e.g. homosexuals, gay marriages, women priests, de facto relationships, give priest choice to marry, etc. etc. If we change these, how can we call ourselves followers of Jesus when it goes against all the teachings and also what is in the Bible? Would changing these rules, make more people attend Mass? I don't think so. Our Catholic Church has also been inclusive and I believe that if you feel you

truly belong, you would know that God loves everyone just of the action. Another thing is that we should not accept what is being trivialised in society—like the Christmas season. It is a season of the birth of Christ and to rejoice on what the saviour is bringing us—not a holiday and not a time for eating and drinking. In Australia, and I believe it is being done in the name of being 'inclusive' this special and holy season is celebrated as a major holiday and everyone is putting up a tree and lights, etc. without truly knowing the meaning behind the tree and light—it truly is a season of rebirth and renewal. The one question I would like to Council to also consider is whether the hearts of majority of people will change if their wishes are met. Because no matter what we do, what we change in our traditions and rituals, if our hearts are not changed, then nothing will change. People in Education should also be told that they are to teach the teaching of the Holy Church not their personal views.

To become a spiritually oriented group of people who learn from the Gospel and practice what Jesus asks of us.

To have a Church that is inclusive and based on the teachings of Jesus.

Preamble The question that has been put is “What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?” Seeking to discern the movement of the Holy Spirit among and within us, we think we hear God's voice: “Why have you abandoned me? Come back to the Gospel, to the Beatitudes, to the Commandments: Love God and love one another. Come back to the rock that is your foundation and follow God's will, telling what is the Truth; the Word of God. “Be my Church, gathered together. Be poor, poor in spirit, humbly serving to heal the wounded among you and around you. “Respect the presence of Christ in my Church. Respect Christ in receiving Communion. Respect Christ in each other, and look for the face of Jesus in the stranger. “Show your love, care and understanding within your parishes and in the greater community around you. Engage with each other, living my love for you, in your parish, among other parishes, and with those other communions who are also seeking Me”. Summary points—Much of the group discussion moved quickly to thoughts on what we should be doing, especially as at a parish level, though some points are expressed as candidates for inspired declarations. Possibly inspired declarations include: • God is asking all of us, “Why have you abandoned me?” • Come back to the Gospel, the Beatitudes and the Commandments: love God and love one another. • Come back to basics and follow God’s will. Telling what is the Truth, the Word of God. • Be my Church, gathered together. • Be poor, poor in spirit. • Humbly serve to heal the wounded. • Respect the presence of Christ in our Church. Respect Christ in receiving Communion. • Respect Christ in each other. • Look for Jesus in the stranger. • Show your love, care and understanding within our parish and greater community • Engage with neighbouring parishes and churches of other denominations.

Firstly, I would like to thank the Catholic Church in Australia for their continued efforts to do the good works of Jesus today, and to assure the plenary council of my prayers. While I have only ever experienced good education, faith formation, friendships, community and the ability to do something for another while involved in the Catholic Church, I know this has not been the experience of many. I am glad this Council is taking place to hopefully create and implement protocols and procedures in the seminary, in organisations and in parishes to ensure abuse, particularly child sexual abuse NEVER occurs again in the Catholic Church in Australia. I ask for the continued support of young seminarians and religious who, as a young person myself, are continued sources of inspiration and guidance. But we young people cannot do it alone. We need the support of the whole Church in Australia to ensure the vocations of all young people are supported, enriched and remain faith filled. As a new Primary school teacher, I say that now, more than ever I need the support, wisdom and kindness of those who have journeyed further in life and faith to encourage me on this vocational journey. I implore that the Catholic Church remains strong in its commitment to the sacraments especially in regards to the seal of confession. I ask that the sanctity of marriage is continued to be upheld and that the Church continues to remain staunch in its protection of life in regards to abortion and euthanasia. I believe that God is asking for these things especially in the face of such vehement opposition. May the Church continue to be vocal in these matters, so that the sanctity and beauty of life and love as intended by God may be preserved and provide an alternative

<p>opinion for young people who are developing their opinions, or those who are becoming disenchanted with what the world has to offer.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be accepting of one another. Love needs to be the predominant theme at the forefront of all our actions and decisions.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be an inclusive Church served by more fully formed priests. Women want to be heard, respected and acknowledged for what they genuinely have to contribute. Clericalism needs to be abolished and women and men be equally responsible with the priest for the parish or whatever new faith community evolves in the future. Women can help to build welcoming communities (including welcoming divorced people) through mutual respect of men and women in their faith journeys. Women can undertake leadership roles. The priest's role is seen as evangeliser and liturgical and sacramental leader. Other roles are pastoral care, financial management etc. Women can support priests by assisting or undertaking all of these roles. Aply qualified women and men should be able to give homilies. Women should be visible in the structure of the global Church and on the altar but not just as readers, special ministers or altar servers. In the present structure of the Church, women will only achieve effective leadership roles if they are ordained as deacons and priests. We can look at successful corporate models of women and men sharing decision-making and management skills and implement them. Formation in seminaries needs to involve seminarians in the real world with women (including lay women) included in teaching. Men and women studying theology together in theological colleges is preferable rather than in seminaries. Bishops and priests are required (or should be required) to have ongoing professional development with contributions from the laity. Celibacy should not be compulsory.</p>
<p>Lay people to balance the institutional—related to the voice of the Church. Currently, lay involvement in the process/decision-making is minor. Lay Church needs to be represented— participation and input of this group guided by the Holy Spirit, would lead to a significant VOICE in the voting and decision-making. Church has changed—make a point where we need to change structures and move to modern structures. Articulate the legal framework for our hierarchical Church in language inspired by the Gospel. Need to focus on the contemporary world. Need a Canon process with Lay people involved in the decision-making. Role of women within the Church as active leaders, truly involved in decision-making—Ordination of women. Honesty /Openness: Accept and acknowledge what needs to improve and openly handle it. We need to communicate better. Role of media and all other types of communication. Church needs to adopt modern communication strategies/appliances/tools in a way our story is being told to one another and beyond; so that we are recognised for how we love one another. - Online prayer is available. - Daily prayer is available on Apps. Are we responding to the central core of the Gospels—responding to those in need. Need to focus on those in need, and only then can we come back together to ‘break bread’ at the Eucharist. Let’s expand on the work the Church does for those in need. Let’s communicate all that work and highlight it. The Church needs to be open to Radical Change. Allow contraception. Explicit inclusion of Gay people.</p>
<p>To achieve a number of desirable outcomes and solutions to our suffering Church, let us be bold and consider: Optional celibacy for our clergy, Women priests, Married clergy. A simple shortcut? Ask our Anglican and Episcopal fellow Christians to allow us to join them.</p>
<p>Divorce and coming back to Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People shouldn’t be judged</li> <li>• More support systems for people in this situation that want to talk</li> <li>• Effect on youth as parents don’t attend Church</li> <li>• sacrament shouldn’t be withheld.</li> </ul> <p>Reaching out to Youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise more youth groups to be led by younger priests</li> <li>• One month dedicated to youth</li> <li>• Leadership roles to be available to youth</li> <li>• Both boys and girls to be encouraged to be altar servers</li> <li>• Opportunities for older youth within the Church</li> <li>• More social events for youth to encourage them back to the Church</li> <li>• More nuns in Catholic schools.</li> </ul> <p>Women in higher roles in Church</p>

- To see more major leadership roles for women • Women to have equal opportunities to become priest/Pope.

God is asking us to give a permanent decision-making and voting role for the laity on the Plenary Council, especially women who have both theological expertise and pastoral experience. God is asking us to review the training of priests so that a parish can be confident that priests who "listen" and understand the needs of the parishioners will be appointed.

To be more courageous and open. In our archdiocese of [ - ], we wanted to invite an internationally known speaker to give a retreat and some public lectures on Teilhard de Chardin. Permission was granted to bring her, [ - ], for the retreat but not for the public lectures. Since the latter would be the source of funding for the former, the project had to be cancelled. The reason given for not allowing the public lecture was that although Teilhard had been 'rehabilitated' especially in the light of Vatican II, some groups in the archdiocese might have their deep faith disturbed. This response is both disheartening and disturbing to me ...

1. DISTURBING. What is this deep faith? Are they speaking of a deep relationship with God, a personal relationship? How might that be disturbed in a damaging way? Might it not rather be challenged and deepened? Or are they speaking of faith as a commitment to facts and beliefs as the old Act of Faith used to say, 'O my God, I firmly believe all the truths that the Holy Catholic Church believes and teaches ...' Changing the interpretation or point of view of the facts, might be disturbing in that case but is that a bad thing? Do they mean an entrenched faith, an inflexible faith? Surely that needs to be disturbed.

2. DISHEARTENED. I am disheartened that in this day and age there is such fear, such protectionism, such lack of confidence in people and in the action of the Spirit in our lives. I thought we had moved beyond that and that our leaders were more open and courageous, encouraging the faithful to be more open and courageous and better informed. If Teilhard has been exonerated, then where is the 'danger' in his point of view being shared? It could be liberating and enlivening rather than disturbing. Furthermore, this protectionism robs the majority of the faithful of the opportunity to learn more and to develop their relationship with God in a wider, richer and deeper fashion. I know so many people who would have relished the opportunity to listen to [ - ] and to have been encouraged to widen and deepen their faith, their understanding of reality and their consequent relationship with God. They have been robbed of the choice.

To return to our Christian roots (pre-Vatican II). Australia has become a hedonistic country like most Western countries, a country that legalises the killing of the unborn is a country doomed. I have rarely ever heard a priest during a homily at Mass ever speak out about this grave injustice, shame on our clergy, God did not call you to be silent on such grave matter. God is asking our country to repeal the legislation of abortion and that of same-sex marriage (which once again, the Church did not exactly come out in force voicing its opposition when this despicable abomination came upon our land). Like the Church of Laodicea in Revelations 3:15 always lukewarm. God is asking all Catholics to adhere to the One True faith as taught by the doctors of the Church and which was safeguarded by tradition but sadly has been eroded over the last 50 years. God is asking Australia to turn back to Him and Our Lady, we as a country now adore the God's of wealth, entertainment and technology. What value will any of this be at our particular judgment? God is asking that all Catholic educators in our schools to first and foremost teach our children the sacred truths that belong to the Catholic faith. Sex education and the latest satanic filth that is commonly known as gender theory needs to be completely abolished lest we corrupt the innocence and purity of our children. God is asking that all Australians but especially our clergy to put pressure on our politicians to bring about legislation that would protect our children in this matter. God is also asking all our educators (parents, teachers and clergy) to teach the youth about the reality of HELL as well as Heaven and purgatory, just as the Blessed Virgin showed the 3 children of Fatima a vision of Hell that frightened them terribly. It appears to me that instead, we are obsessed with other secondary and far less important matters such as social justice crusading, etc. God is asking us to return to the practice of daily recitation of the rosary, weekly confession, performing other devotions such as the stations of

the cross, wearing the scapular, first 5 Saturday devotions, etc. God is asking us to actually attend Mass EVERY Sunday and holy day of obligation, not just Christmas and Easter, to receive holy communion worthily (i.e. in a state of grace, kneeling and receiving the sacred host on the tongue). Most importantly, God is asking ALL Nations to demand that their bishops in union with the Pope consecrate Russia to the Immaculate heart of Mary as requested to Sr Lucia in 1929 if we are to avoid a universal chastisement.

To follow the 10 commandments.

God is asking us to reflect on our relationships with each other and the world. Our relationships with our parishes. Our relationship within our families. Our relationship with our neighbours. Who are my brother and sister? Our sense of nationhood/Church and its exclusion of others able to feel like they are part of us.

I feel that God is asking Church leaders and followers to go back to Jesus' Commandments: Love God and Love each other. When we make a choice we need to ask ourselves if the choice we are making is what Jesus would do. Jesus challenged Church leaders he challenged tradition and questions what was truly important. If we look at the history of the Church can we say that the choices made by leaders show 'love' to others or are they based on making the Church 'look good.' Jesus said people need to forgive, but there are things that Church leaders have done and have allowed to occur that go against Jesus' commandments and hurt people. When you talk to people about Catholicism there are so many negative perspectives mainly centred on the Church not supporting or reaching modern society and based on the sexual and physical abuse endured by children in the Church. I am Catholic and I believe that the message from Jesus is beautiful, God made the world, he sent his son who showed love and forgiveness by dying on the cross so that we may enter the kingdom of heaven. But without 'love' what is the point? The Church does not seem to understand the effects of physical and sexual abuse endured by children over a period of time and I find it difficult to believe and it makes me cross that there are people in the Church who abused others and who systematically covered it up. We still have people in power who allowed for other children to get abused instead of reporting the abuser. If Jesus were here what would he say? That reconciliation (a sacrament designed by the Church) is more important than the abuse of children, or would Jesus argue that ensuring that a person whether he is a priest or not does not hurt another is more important? When you find out that someone is being abused you need to show love to that person. You need to ensure that the person abused receives the help and support needed. Many children did not feel safe enough to speak up so it was up to those who knew, to speak. The sacrament of reconciliation loses its value when priests use it as an excuse not to report abuse. I feel that that was not what God wanted. The Church has lost many people due to priests (members of society who a meant to be trusted) hurting others as well as the priests, bishops, cardinals and Popes who knew but did nothing but allow the abuse to happen. Until the Church understands this and recognises this, they will continue to lose people. And no having a child protection officer allocated to each church is not going to help. Priests should be mandatory reporters, just like every other profession. You are wrong if you think Jesus would want you to say quiet. When Cardinal Pell stood up and said that he knew, but didn't care or he forgot? He should have lost his position. How can we follow a Church, when its leaders protect abusers?

➤ To be bold in professing our faith ➤ To be accepting of others, though not necessarily condoning their behaviour ➤ To love justly and tenderly ➤ Honesty and transparency within the Church ➤ Improve communication channels within Church structures—down to the grass roots ➤ To pray ➤ To come back to him and be open to him ➤ To be more inclusive ➤ To attend Mass more regularly ➤ To involve ourselves more fully towards Christian Unity and co-operation with other faiths ➤ To overcome divisions within our Church and society at large ➤ To have more understanding and empathy ➤ To bring people back to the Church ➤ Reflection—What do you think God is asking of us (re Personal Advocacy) in Australia at this time? ➤ Responses shared: \* denotes repetition of response • To get to know the real person behind the disability • Strive hard to ensure our friends

<p>feel really valuable • To be the face of God to our friends • To help the Church be more welcoming to people with disabilities • For our friends to attend Mass regularly • To be more inclusive in the parish ** • For the clergy to be more accepting of PAS • Education of the parishioners, especially the parents of our friends to look beyond... • Make known sacramental opportunities • To help our friends reach their full potential • Fulfil an urgent requirement in the community • Recruit and train as many volunteers as possible.</p>
<p>• To have married priests • To have women priests • To find ways of bringing people back to the Church—especially the young people • To be people of hope • To be open to God and God’s presence in the world • To be a Church that has credibility, that people can trust—we need to be authentic witnesses • To welcome the stranger, look after the hungry, the sick and the persecuted. Through opening up these statements there was a general consensus that: as a Church we need to be open to see God at work in the world, and help those who do not know, or have any interest in God to recognise the reality of God’s presence. As Church we need to be welcoming of all people and encourage others to do the same, not being judgemental. We also need to help restore the credibility of the Church to the many who have become disillusioned, and in particular to let people know that the Church is made up of frail human beings, who are sinful. God’s love and grace is the one thing that can restore us.</p>
<p>• Love one another—be more community minded • Be Compassionate, share God’s love • Share our faith and beliefs • Reaching out to others • Spend more time praying and reading the Bible • Unity, oneness • Transparency and openness • Unity amongst Christians willing to work together to make known God’s love • For Christians to be credible—be the face of Christ to others • Focus on God and See all people as equal • Be honest, have integrity in dealing with others • Drown out the noise of negative influence and be instrumental in others’ lives in a positive way • Help those less fortunate than ourselves • Show Jesus love by loving each other • Unite, help one another and work together in harmony • Put my own life in order—reach out to my family and my neighbours additional information added as an attachment to explain the group context and further aspects of the conversations.</p>
<p>1. Increased emphasis on Prayer. 2a. Consciences to be instructed and informed. 2b. Listening to the Holy Spirit. 3. Show love, compassion and mercy. 4. Emphasis on exploring/understanding and reading the Scriptures. 5. Getting to know God. 6. Examination of Conscience based on the 10 commandments. 7. Have a ministry in each state to the Aboriginal people. Special Masses for them. 8. Reach out to the broken and those in need of healing. 9. Bring the Good News to those in need. 10. Elevate and recognise the role of women in the Church and in leadership.</p>
<p>I think God is looking down on the Church and asking why it doesn't reflect society—in either the hierarchy/positions of power and influence or congregations. So He's asking "Where are the women priests? Bishops? Archbishops?" Why are the pews empty? Why do so many congregations consist of older people?</p>
<p>As throughout history, I believe that the role of the Church is to be light in the darkness. The way we love one another, seek reconciliation with one another and care for the needs of each other will bring the love of God into the world that is wary of the Church. More than ever, they will know we are Christian by our love!</p>
<p>To educate parishioners, (adults, young adults and children) to know their Catholic faith and understand the reasons of the traditions and rituals practices or the different parts of the Mass (what it means) of the Catholic Faith so they can appreciate the Mass/ Adoration/Novena/Praise and Worship, etc. Many parishioners go for Mass as an obligation or out of fear. It is a sin not to attend Mass. Many young people go to Church with their parents when they are young but come High school/university, they start to question as to why do we have to do this and that. Sadly, I think one reason is, they have not been taught in depth about our faith and Church during catechism both in primary and high school. Are teachers who are teaching the Faith really practising Catholics or what is the standard of training for teachers? The Church needs to show and teach The Love of God. It is because we Love God we want to go to Church and have fellowship with fellow Christians and be</p>

part of a community. We need to be community based and not individuals. We want to be a friendly and welcoming Church too. We need to have more greeters round the Church. Not only to give out bulletins but be available even at the end of Mass so people can approach them if they need to be in contact with priest or Church ministries, etc. There should be morning tea after each Mass for people to interact.

So Jesus says to them, "Well, then, pay to the Emperor what belongs to the Emperor, and pay to God what belongs to God." So, Jesus did not oppose the payment of taxes. In fact, Jesus paid taxes. We turn to Matthew (who, by the way, was a tax collector before being called to become one of Jesus' disciples) again. It hurts me to see the Catholic Church not doing what they were asked to do. The Great Commission.

"16 Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

We are all happy in our own comfy zone. My nephew who was in the Jesuit Seminary for the past two years has suffered under the hands of his Superiors, living in Pathetic conditions, limited food to eat, no bed to sleep and Pressure of performing well in academics so much so he has left the seminary after an Incident. Why can't you use the money to provide better living conditions for those who aspire to become a priest, while parish priests, principals, bishops, deacons, cardinals are Living a life of Luxury?

1. To consider whether or not there is a place for the bureaucracy of the Church in today's society. 2. To focus on the homeless and marginalised; to share more equitably our abundance. 3. To consider women leaders. 4. To let the priests be "holy" and employ admin people with financial training to do the admin of a parish. 5. Inclusion versus shame and blame—divorced people—communion to be shared by all. 6. Inclusion: women to be included and given a voice in all aspects of Church life to become clergy in the Church. Embodiment of Christian values. 7. Inclusion: married men to be allowed to be clergy. 8. Inclusion of LBGTQI and everyone who is experiencing marginalisation. 9. Relationship breakdowns—To work towards win/win solutions or walk away; no martyrs needed. 10. Belief in the Divine within each of us i.e. to believe we are loved by God. 11. Contemplative/silence; small group e.g. meditation. 12. To open our hearts to the presence of God within us in community as well as alone. 13. It should be more about the person in the Church and their spirituality. 14. We need a heartfelt (kinder) response to those suffering poverty, homelessness, psychoses/drug-related displacement, refugees, etc. 15. If "us" equals the Church, then we need a realistic (empathetic) response to marital problems, especially to divorce or contraception. 16. Go back to basics, teaching the basic principles of love, respect, as Jesus preached. 17. Help one another—the power of one. E.g. one can of food for St Vinnies; helping a person in despair or in questioning their sexuality. 18. Participate in the life of the Church as you are the Church.

Accepting of everyone, not judgemental, Not discriminate against them, have self-respect and respect for others, Patience, tolerance with the way that things are changing and for the Church to catch up. Have faith and remain loyal to the Church. Forgiveness. More care for the environment. Tolerance. Reconciliation. Positive role models of our faith. To be patient, explore and connect more deeply with ourselves spiritually. Have faith and be stronger in expressing this to others. Promote values rather than disillusionment. Prioritise our time and spiritual values instead of materialism. Spirituality and community—spending time with others and serving others. Focus on charity. Build our families and working on our relationships. Work on our relationship with God, working on ourselves and having inner peace in order to be able to give more to others and our community. Treat the Earth with respect instead of sacrificing the environment for financial gain. Understanding of others and forgiveness. There is a lot of trust to be rebuilt in all churches and God is asking us to work together to build that trust. God wants us to help, serve and be understanding of others and

help those who can't help themselves. Resilience, patience and a personal calling. Organisations including education have become more of a business and more focused on economic growth, which is necessary but has become the main focus in recent times. To be tolerant and understanding. The need to continue Jesus' good news within the framework of the Church in modern times. Show respect and care for the wider community. Develop a relationship with God and let this relationship with him reflect in the way we relate to each other.

We as a group think that God is asking Australians to show through service to others, the true values that Catholics uphold. It is time to encourage all to Reflect and following the example of Jesus Christ and the way He treated others. We believe that the Catholic Church should make a clear set of values and display them frequently in everything we do in every Church in every Catholic school in every Church agency. These values need to clearly link to the work of Jesus Christ and examples of how the Catholic Church show these values in everyday life need to be made visible to all Australians. The aim of setting these clear values and examples would be to allow all Australians to identify the Catholic Church in a positive light. We believe that non-Catholics only see the rigid traditions and laws of our Church and do not get informed of the values of love, kindness, respect (for people and land), forgiveness, tolerance, understanding, acceptance, service and unity that the Church offers for all. These values will be the basis for evangelisation. We have so many examples of how Catholics and Catholic agencies advocate these values. We need to ensure that all Australians are aware of them. It is time to paint a positive picture.

True faith and a restoration of the Church's rich traditions back into Mass and belief teaching.

Give our love unconditionally and care for each other and our planet.

- Faith needs to be more integrated in schools and society.
- More accountability from parents—for example: taking responsibility for their family's faith journeys.
- Head office need to be more knowledgeable of the doctrines/Catholic Faith and not just legalities and business focused. Often the non-Catholic ratio is only business trained and do not practice or understand the Catholic ethos.
- Leaders of the Church need to take more responsibility to listen and act on the voices of the people.
- Change views on divorce re: divorcees not being able to receive communion.
- Change view on outdated ideas and doctrines. Re: divorce, communion, homosexuality, transgender, IVF and marriage.
- More inclusiveness of people from all walks of life e.g. divorced people, gay community.
- Allow women to be priests.
- Allow priests to marry.
- This is an important time in history of great change, when all people young and old really need to be embraced by the Catholic Church for moral support and understanding both emotionally and financially, without guilt, judgement, shame and or prejudice. We are at a crisis where society is morally bankrupt; therefore, the Catholic Church needs to get back to the grass roots of society.
- God is asking us to connect with those that are disenfranchised within our community, to give equal voice and value to all members of our community and provide a safe, non-judgemental faith environment that welcomes all to feel God's love and blessings.
- Be Christ-like
- Be more tolerant and embrace the different types of families that exist in today's society.
- Church needs to connect more with modern society
- Make Church more relevant—people are losing their faith because it is disconnected from their lifestyles.
- Keep it simple—promote our relationship with one another and with Christ as being front and centre.
- Revisit Humanae Vitae with the laity where women are not empowered to use contraception.
- Try to engage and reach out to teenagers more.
- Be more engaging and uplifting
- Embrace and preserve our core traditions and values—playing of Christmas carols and Christmas decorations that capture the true essence of Christmas.
- Have a balanced approach: maintain our traditions and rituals but weave them into our contemporary world.
- Be transparent
- Acknowledge the mistakes/abuse made.

We believe God is asking us to have unity amongst communities. This can be accomplished by changing the order of the weekend Masses. My 23-year-old son has suggested that he and also his friends will attend Mass if there are changes of this sort. 1. The first part of Mass (20 minutes) consisting greeting of participants followed by sermon and prayer. 2. Have all parishioners go to the hall and to sit down facing one another and discuss the sermon of the day while sharing a plate and

drink. Then finalising the parishioners with a final prayer and dismissal. This Mass style will install unity and reinforce the strength of the community. This will be a good angle to keep the young/teenagers/adolescents connected to the Church, especially when they need it most. My son also suggested to have the Bible stories related to the daily sermon to be translated to modern day language so that the younger generation can comprehend and make use of in their lives in this modern world. I believe in Australia God would not mind if there were female priests and that all priests can marry if they want to. The whole family believe that no priest should be allowed to wander in school grounds as they please. They are only to visit schools by appointment.

To bring his people back to him. In [ - ] with a population of 22,378, 53.8% ticked the box as Christian and 21.4% ticked the box that said Catholic. So in [ - ] that is 4,788 people (These people had a choice of a number of options including none, so why did they still tick the box Catholic). Our Church Census was 160 families attending. Therefore, there are over 4,000 people just in my parish area that are still committed but are waiting for something. Adoration is one way that we can reconnect these people to Jesus directly and they can talk with him and hear and feel his response individually. (Come to me all of you that are weary and burdened and I will give you rest). Let us gather the sheep and the Shepherd will do the rest. From this, our Masses will grow and so will our community, this is our one thing. I also believe that through children we can change the future, as with Rudolph Giuliani when he was mayor of New York said that the change has to be generational and so it was, and so it can be for our Church as well. Masses focused on children using their songs from school and their readings as well as a children's morning tea afterwards. Children will motivate other children to come and they will motivate their parents and from this we can also build a community. Many will talk about the structure and changing the rule married priests and women priests but I believe the above will bring the people back to their and our God.

I feel God is asking the people of God in Australia to become a discerning people. That we recognise that God is creating us moment by moment and it is imperative that we listen to these moments, that we reflect on them and we are prepared to HEAR God and make choices that move toward him. While we can take a step in discerning for choices that are "important", I feel we are being asked by God to be discerners in our day-to-day lives.

I think God is asking us to reflect (discern) on our daily lives and how we relate and live. God is asking us to allow him/her to continue creating us each moment of the day; to make choices that lead us to a positive, joyful, lifestyle; to face each day/moment with a heart and mind that is open to the Spirit. I also feel that God would ask us to take care when developing structures around the Christian life. Asking us to listen to what is being offered in the Gospel, offered through our Gifts of the Spirit and not hindering his Word by outdated, irrelevant structures.

I think God is asking us to recognise more deeply the gift of life that we have been given. That we turn around our "throw away" mentality and value all that we have been given and make choices that lead us to become persons of love, kindness (+ other Spirit Gifts) and relate to others with deep respect. I think that God wishes us to value this life, rather than devising ways and means in which to setup structures that will take away this life and lead us to e.g. forms of assisted dying. In all of this, I believe God is calling for informed leadership that can assist us to make informed and positive about our lives.

I think God is asking us to tap into the reality of our culture, our way of life, the changing scenes in our country and current and future leadership. I think God is asking us to be discerning and REAL about our ordinariness and in this reflection, I think he would be asking Clergy at all levels to consider how they clothe themselves; how they present themselves to the people. Back to front collars; the clothing worn by the priest and bishop at liturgical functions. I think God would be asking that this archaic way of BEing is not helpful in forming relationships, that this way BEing did belong to a long gone era and that we should be developing ways dressing that are more suitable for our

<p>climate, for the visual and especially to remove ONE WAY of lessening the divide between ordained personnel and people of God. God knows that this way of dressing belonged to the ordinary way of clothing in long gone eras and I think he would be wanting his leadership personnel to present themselves in a more relevant way today.</p>
<p>I believe God is calling on us Catholics to be the salt of the earth and be people that truly represent the love of Christ. In doing so, little by little, the non-believers will come to us and through our genuine character they themselves may be persuaded to follow our Lord. This means we must have an authenticity about our faith and know what the Catholic teachings are and be able to clearly explain it. At the same time, we must have a love of our neighbours and not be dismissive of who they are. In this sense I feel God is calling Church members to throw away prejudice. As many Catholics are of a conservative mindset, they can see the world as black and white and this creates an "us and them" mindset. This turns away people who are either homosexual, divorced, foreign or have a troubled background. Instead we must be bridges between them and God. Finally having a sense of community in our parishes draws people in. A parish that embraces various events like food festivals, youth gatherings and community service will show the Church in a more Christ-like light.</p>
<p>We need a Church that reflects the lives of the people. There is need to return to smaller Church, less bureaucratic, less political. Is there a need for Catholic schools when 40 % are Catholic and that is only place people encounter the Church? A hospital system that can be in conflict with Catholic values, abortion. The costs are prohibitive in schools and hospitals. The life of the parish community is dying. Maybe to discover the small communities that were in the early Church before the Roman Empire in 315 AD. Smaller communities that existed in Australia. We have numerous saints who lived simply, Francis of Assisi. The large organisations are not meeting at the local level. In my area, I am aware of a Christian Community of a Pastor who collects two busloads of children, feeds them, provides games with a point and the parents come and pick them. For some of the families, it will be the only cooked meal, not fast food. The Catholic Church seems to have lost that simplicity.</p>
<p>I think God wants our Church simplified. Our bishops, archbishops and for that matter even our Pope, to be accessible. We need to stop all formalities of calling people in these positions for instance "your grace". They are just ordinary people chosen to serve the Lord. Jesus is called Jesus and Jesus was God. So why can't we address all priests as just 'Father'?</p>
<p>We need to look after the vulnerable. We need to put pressure on the government to block websites that are ruining the youth. Everything is so sexualised. The young, the poor, the sick and the aged need more hands-on help.</p>
<p>1. Address the environmental catastrophe that is evolving. 2. Close the Aboriginal gap 3. End the institutional misogyny in the Catholic Church, please.</p>
<p>To keep the Faith, remain steadfast and stand for what is right in a new generation encountering a culture of indifference and political correctness.</p>
<p>To help young people see the face of God through the beauty of Catholic tradition and teachings and how they so perfectly apply to life and improve it.</p>
<p>We feel that God is asking Australians to be more Authentic in their faith. Many Australians have been baptised/identify as Catholic, but many do not attend weekly Mass or live out the faith in their daily lives. Feel that God is asking us to live out the faith more in their everyday life and be a good witness. We also think God is calling Australians to have a heart for mission and just helping others who are doing it tough. In Australia, we are so blessed to have good education, health, opportunity and chance to develop gifts and talents. If people can use these to help others and reach out, this will be strengthen/build the Church and be a tool of evangelisation.</p>
<p>To reconnect with God and our Church communities through prayer and action. This in turn benefits our self, our families, our communities and our world.</p>
<p>Our apostolate thinks that God wants us to come to Him where He is present on Earth. ... in the holy Eucharist and more than that to spend time with Him in Eucharistic adoration. Popes and Saints have been exhorting the people for decades/centuries but not only are the people resistant, but the clergy. The Church it seems has missed the point ... If we go back to the pure source of the Gospel,</p>

we see that there are many times that Jesus called us to Himself 'Can you not pray one hour with Me?' 'Watch and pray', 'Come to Me', 'He stood up and cried out 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and from My heart shall flow rivers of living water'', 'When I am lifted up, I will draw all men to Myself'. On the cross, He was lifted up in hatred, in the Mass and adoration He is lifted up in love. ... all of humanity is drawn closer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Why is it so hard for the laity to gain access to Jesus in the Blessed sacrament? It should be fundamental and central to our faith. churches doors are locked due to security and many priests are unwilling to provide a small room for adoration, when they could be leading the way. For it is in the presence of Jesus that we are transformed 'from glory to glory' and where we are changed into the image and likeness of God Himself. How different our Church would look and how attractive would it be to the world! The world is looking for direction and in Eucharistic adoration, it is Our Lord who gives that direction, dignity and peace, so lacking in modern times.

How we can help the Church to move forward with more up to date ideas?

God is asking for us to understand our faith better, so that we may be able to practice what Christ actually wants us to practice and to make disciples in this world by living the truth in charity. God is also asking us to unite as one. Although we have many different gifts and talents, we need to be as one. Keeping the tradition or even bringing the tradition back is a good way to be as one. Australia is very blessed and is a very blessed country. People tend to forget about God or even don't need God anymore. God is asking for us to be extra vigilant in our faith especially in the good times. We need to be more humble and be grateful for the blessings that God has showered us.

To look to the sustainability of the Church, through: the role of women, Indigenous and cross-cultural engagement and meaningful engagement of children and young people. We feel the above will be furthered with collaborative, inclusive leadership.

- To be a community; fraternal and spiritual; active in the streets, in politics, the economy, everywhere. Bringing to people the Lord's selfless love. - To be more forgiving, to be there for the sick and needy, neglected and to show them that we care and that we love them as brothers and sisters in the Christ Lord Jesus who comes to the world for everyone. -To renew the people through Life in the Spirit Seminar - Our Lord, to me, is asking for prayers to the women, old and young, and to those "Special Ministers" to dress modestly for serving at the Altar of God Most High. Should not wear clothes not fit to serve our Lord. - I believe God is asking for a great spiritual renewal. One quick way to achieve this is to introduce weekend Life in the Spirit seminars for the parishioners; starting with bishops, priests, Church leaders, etc. Make the Life in the Spirit seminars compulsory for those to be confirmed. - To welcome all into our Church community who ask for baptism, sacraments and Marriage. Not to be selective or question their motives for they may worship in a different way but should still feel welcomed and encouraged without judgement. - Be faithful to our Lord Jesus; to love our neighbours; repeal same-sex marriage - To fill the churches with the faithful; where are all the children?

I think God is asking us to be tolerant and inclusive of all people regardless of race, religion, marital status, gender or sexual orientation.

I think God is asking us to engage with the youth, in a way that Jesus did. Not to water down the message, but in the barriers to faith in terms of clothing and 'props' for newcomers i.e. less like the Pharisees and more like the people. Priests to look humble in their attire, like monks instead of flowing gowns and hats. Change some of the formality around the delivery of the message and structure. If we don't relate to the youth, there will be a skeleton Church in 30 years' time. Also create more vibrancy and learn from the super churches in the US—quality assurance around preaching, consistency of preaching about the Gospel and how to relate to everyday life. Close down the dead and dull churches and put those resources into hubs of the community in main geographical areas. So that when you walk into a Catholic church it feels the same, it looks the same and therefore if new people attend, they will have the same experience e.g. what does the 'franchise' look like and facilities it offers, such as coffee shops, break out rooms, conference rooms for midweek worship. Create places of 'born again' people that are relevant to the world and were

<p>people would be proud to be Catholic. The test ... would I be proud to bring a non-Catholic neighbour to my church, where they would feel welcome and could chat to other 'normal' people? Think about the old statues and whether they are relevant to our Mass. They could be in a museum but not in the main worship area. Ensure the music ministry at each Church is of a good quality so not to turn people away. Again, it's about resources and currently we are spread way too thin. Look at Riverview church in Perth, Joyce Meyer, Steven Furtick in USA to see where people are going to hear the message of Christ. God wants us to keep our Catholics in our churches and not lose them to the other churches, but it is very tempting to move away. Especially with the current Royal Commission findings. We are generally ashamed to be Catholic and nothing has been done to create positive publicity so we can at least let the Church tell of our good deeds. Please do something Australia-wide and fast. How do our teenagers feel to say they are Catholic with all that's going on? Not proud to say the least! Thanks.</p>
<p>The following points discussed, and questions raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ø When/How can we produce Liturgy, which is more appropriate to our Aboriginal People (mix tradition and own flavour).</li> <li>Ø Find ways to be more responsive to Aboriginal people's needs. Suggestion:—Maybe we get more Aboriginal Chaplains or upskill some existing Chaplains to be more in touch with the needs of the Aboriginal people.</li> <li>Ø How do we deal with bringing Church to the other, i.e. integrating of cultures?</li> <li>Ø What can we develop within Prison Ministry (Church) to bring a sense of community around us</li> <li>Ø The underlining message:—How can we make the Church more meaningful, more relevant to these times i.e. music, Hillsong, etc.?</li> <li>Ø How do we reignite the Church?</li> <li>Ø How is the Church going to move with society? What is holding us back?</li> <li>Ø We would like to see a welcoming and engaging Church where 'All' people feel part of the Church.</li> <li>Ø We must be real about our Faith. Prison Ministry works pastorally. Does the Church work pastorally? i.e. When is the Church speaking out, example, the treatment of refugees? Is the Church showing respect, walking humbly, etc. Jesus did, is the Church doing so?</li> <li>Ø We are faced with big challenges between Church and society i.e. Marriage, Same sex marriage, school education, Youth. More than 80% of prisoners have been on drugs In reality we only speak about a small reflection for the future. What do we think God is asking for the future of Australia?</li> </ul>
<p>Review our political culture—that it may truly serve the community. Review the world of social media—that it may be a source of building up the community rather than a source of breaking it down. That the Church may be more inclusive i.e. not to deny full participation because of personal circumstances.</p>
<p>* To sort out the abuses of our Church. Right the wrongs. * Priests to be true shepherds and be challenged to speak the truth from Love * For the Church to be more humble. Listen to its people. Acceptance of differing ways of expressing spirituality. * A renewed sense of the "sacred". Solid teachings. Faith formation for all. * Tolerance of each other. Reaching out to the marginalised in our society.</p>
<p>Be responsive to the needs and changes of our times especially in the area of sexuality and population control in society. Accept that God has many roads/paths that are open to his people that lead to him.</p>
<p>Whilst recently we have witnessed our politicians change laws they say reflects Australian society values, the Catholic Church, in my opinion, must maintain its core moral teachings. • Life and Dignity of the Human Person • Call to Family, Community, and Participation • Rights and Responsibilities. • Preferential Option for the Poor. • The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers. • Solidarity The Catholic must • maintain male only clergy • maintain The Apostles Creed as it stands • maintain its stance against abortion and euthanasia.</p> <p>Matthew 28:20 reminds us that Jesus will be with his Church always even to the end of the age. This means we should not fear even when persecutions and tribulations come upon the Church.</p>

Australians can still practice their faith with relative freedom, but in some countries, they are not so fortunate, facing continual pressures and risk of terrorist attacks as they attend services. This was evidenced most recently in the bombing in the cathedral on the island of Jolo in the Philippines. There can be no doubt that the Church in Australia is undergoing enormous trials, yet I believe it will emerge stronger as a result. It is often through such trials that the Church as a whole is strengthened. Some may fall away. A number of parishes are experiencing a decline in people attending Mass as well as those considering religious life or priesthood. The Census of 2016 shows those identifying as "no religion" has become the most numerous group (30.1%), with Catholics at 22.6% in second place. Those identifying as Anglican have fallen from a high of 41% in 1921 to third place at 13.3% in 2016. This should not strike fear in Catholics but rather a desire to do more. So what can we do? Lay parishioners could take a more active role in outreach work. Oftentimes I am told that people simply "turn up" to Mass on a Sunday, stay for a cup of coffee/tea, then leave and are not seen again until the following week. Surely our faith means more than this.

I am of the firm belief that the old and new Testament is the inspired word of God, given to us by the Holy Spirit. The loss of Christian faith in the broader community has resulted in a coarsening of our society and loss of respect for life and self. This has resulted in high levels of mental illness within society and a loss of meaning to life. It would be of grave concern to me if the leaders of Christ's Church on earth should stray from his teachings. Christ in His earthly ministry did not seek popularity, but rather challenged the powers of the day even to risking His own life. The history of the Catholic Church has been marked by many attacks on it by the secular authorities and the story of many of Her saints is one of persecution for their beliefs. Any moves to accommodate the modern pagan beliefs would be to repudiate all the Martyrs of the past and more importantly, to repudiate God. I urge the leaders of the Church to boldly re-state the teachings of the God and be the light on the hill that Jesus urged us to be. Any other pathway will lead to societies' downfall.

He is asking us to listen to the views of the future Church (there is currently an accelerating demographic implosion, our Churches will be empty by 2030 at this rate)—those handful of us Church-going Catholics born in the 60s and 70s, and those even fewer born after 1980—we who are still here and love the Church—stop listening to the baby boomers—this has proved fatal for the life of the Church—stop aligning the Church with popular culture.

I think God wants us to be kind. There is too much misery, poverty and violence in the world ... all caused by humans. We have become too self-centred and do not think about others enough. We need to stop, take a deep breath and start to put others before ourselves.

Outreach to isolated communities, prayer groups and Bible study, listening to the children, meeting their needs, teaching the children how to pray and remind them that God loves them.

To have appropriate respect for the Blessed sacrament when in any Church, and not to have social discussions with friends, sometimes with one's back to the Altar, and always disrupting the concentration of those wishing to pray. The term "prayerful silence" seems to be either misinterpreted or misunderstood. Many priests of the parishes set a poor example here, and I rarely if ever hear a priest asking parishioners to stop this behaviour. Secondly, it seems to me to send the wrong message to parishioners, who are correctly informed that the Mass is the greatest prayer that we can offer to God, but are told that priests decide not to offer Mass on Mondays, because they are having the day off! Does this mean that Mass is not as Important on Mondays, or that we should take time off from prayer? What happens to the parishioners who dearly want to go to Mass, but are deprived of the privilege? Thirdly, I cannot recall the last time I heard a priest give a sermon on the necessity for regular confession. This contributes to the generalised loss of "the sense of sin". I cannot reconcile the few people I see going to confession, with the number I see going to Communion. People should be constantly reminded of the dangers of committing sacrilege by going to Communion with serious sins unconfessed! In short, I think that God is asking us to renew and revitalize our respect for the Presence of God in the Tabernacle. To understand that he is indeed watching, as we gaily chat to our neighbours about social activities, with our backs to him! This in

<p>turn would probably lead to an increased appreciation for the value of each Mass and in particular, for the incredible benefits of Confession.</p>
<p>I believe that the Church is called as it has been over the centuries to care for all, especially the most vulnerable. This has to be done in spite of the dominant cultural forces of neo-liberalism, consumerism and corporatism. To me, this means that we reject the mealy-mouthed justifications given for removing the dignity of asylum seekers, people of colour, those in the LGBTIQ community, and women.</p>
<p>I believe God is asking us to live according to the Gospel which is to be good to ourselves and others. To remember our values but not to discriminate against others ... we are not here to judge others...</p>
<p>For us to follow in his teachings and live as he would expect. However, the Catholic Church does not fully allow this/assist us in doing so. It does not offer any applicable information for daily life and presents information in a repetitive boring manner. The Gospel and homily do not offer much guidance and is often difficult to understand with non-Australian priests.</p>
<p>Acceptance.</p>
<p>To listen to the voice of the marginalised, the LGBT community, and all those who are estranged from the Church for whatever the reason and to be inclusive of these people as Jesus did not discriminate, nor should we. To provide more religious to celebrate the Mass—married priests. To give women the opportunity to be priests or at the very least, deacons to better offer support to our ageing communities and young people.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to be a witness to our faith. Being open and honest about a love for God and Jesus is not seen as "the norm" and I feel that many people are uncomfortable with openly expressing that they are Catholic, or religious, or that they go to Church regularly. I believe that the Church needs to be more open and honest about what it means to be Catholic and also be more proactive at dispelling old and outdated beliefs about the Church. The Church IS welcoming of all people, regardless of past sins, the Church is not anti-gay or anti-divorce or anti anything that is seen to be different to the norm. This would help make people feel welcome, rather than judged. The Church needs to be inclusive of all people who wish to believe and the Church needs to allow all people to worship and serve as it suit them. This includes allowing women to take the same leadership roles as men. There is no reason for women to not be priests if they are called by God to do so. I also believe that the Church needs to examine the language of some of the prayers. As a woman, hearing all people referred to as "men" or "mankind" makes me feel as though I am excluded from those prayers. I believe the examination of language also extends to a public open discussion about the translations of the Bible. I would like to see the availability of more explanations and context and facilitation of discussions about the different meanings to stories in the Bible as a different word can change someone's understanding of the original stories. Finally, I think that the Church needs to focus on thanksgiving for all we have in this life. For the majority of people in Australia, life is not a struggle, we are not praying for God to take away our daily suffering. Our country is an affluent one and so I think focusing so much on God helping through tough times does need to be balanced with guiding people to be thankful for all the good things. I feel that people are called to prayer and Church when they are suffering. But we also need to remind people that you should also be called to prayer and Church to offer thanks.</p>
<p>I prayerfully believe that God is asking us in Australia to take a hard, critical look at the institution of the Catholic Church and how it functions. To me, this is very evident from the Royal Commission into Sexual Abuse of Children. If we do not take this opportunity, then I think the Church does not deserve to continue in Australia.</p>
<p>- The Church needs to empower young people to be part of the parish community and life of the Church - Clergy should spend more time journeying with their people but not just with friends/people they like - Clergy should receive better support from the laypeople in the parishes - We should be using our gifts and talents to give to the community/serve others - There is quite a large gap between the young people and the older generation. Both groups should come together to bridge that gap so they can support each other - Create more intergenerational communities within</p>

the parish - Unity within the Church whether it be between the charismatic groups or the traditionalist groups. - Increase of general catechesis within the parish communities. Encourage the clergy/laypeople to learn about the faith and share it with the community. - Be more welcoming to parishioners. Create an environment where people feel like they belong. - The Church shouldn't be afraid of evangelising. We should be talking about God and get over the idea that religion is a 'private matter' - Encourage people to donate more to the parish and not to have a hidden agenda e.g. I will donate \$1000 if the Church does xyz. The Church should also be transparent with how money is used. - Look after the mental health of our clergy.

To come back to the core roots of our faith. To have the ten commandments taught properly at the Mass. There must be proper homilies given that relate to the readings. And not homilies that are so "modern" that you are left wondering how on earth does that relate to the readings. I think GOD is asking us be as the early Christians were and not to give in to modern ways, like accepting homosexuality, etc. Also, not all priests are the same. How many don't appear to have a devotion to Our Lady? People are having a hard time accepting that some priests have been harming children. The Church needs to have full accountability. Why has the Church asked for a media embargo on the George Pell's case? There has to be transparency. All priests who have been found guilty of abusing children or nuns should be defrocked. You can't put a wolf in sheep's clothing back among the flock. If any other person had sexually abused children, they would never be allowed to be near children or work with them again. The Church has lost a lot of credibility.

We are being asked to be open to the emergence of a renewed Church where laity and women share fully in governance, liturgy, community: where clericalism is done away with; where all are included and we humbly acknowledge our sinfulness (abuse) and honestly seek forgiveness; where formation and accountability are the norm for all in service; where Christ and the gospel are truly central in word and practice.

- The youth to show respect to themselves and others. -To be a part of reconciliation by sharing stories and knowledge. - To be good people - caring/compassionate/sharing/tolerance/one world in Jesus. - Living in harmony—acceptance and inclusion. - Live and see the relevance of the Gospel in our daily lives. - Jesus would see not many youth at Church. - Jesus would see people questioning their religion - a loss of faith. - Jesus would see refugee status as a concern. - Jesus would see a large use of electronic media—and a lack of genuine human connection. - More tolerant and kindness - Compassionate - More empathy and more acknowledgement. - Reconciliation – Harmony - acceptance and empathy.

I believe that Christ would want to know why a parish built a new church at a cost of some millions of dollars only a few kms from another newly-built Church. Both attract congregations of less than 50% capacity. At the same time, many people in poor countries such as Cambodia live in desperately poor accommodation. Would Christ not question our priorities? Christ's kingdom is not of bricks and mortar.

I feel we are in an overwhelming situation where many people, both within the Church community, as well as the general population feel for so long the Catholic Church has put the needs of victims of abuse by so many Church officials last. The hypocrisy which has been shown by delaying compensation to these people is a constant reminder that the institutions have been protected while victims have been ignored and at times been re-victimised having to keep telling of their abuse, with lawyers and others in powerful positions in the Church continuing to thwart them. If such things are to be stopped in the future, I feel we need to open the doors of Church power to women. Letting priests marry and having women priests would create a far more balanced hierarchy to lead the Church in the 21st century. If nothing changes very soon, we will have very few people left in our Churches, as young people have left or are leaving due to the lack of credibility they see the Church displays. As an older person, I too feel very despondent about how abuse has been covered up for so long.

<p>I think God is asking us to become people who are realistic about our Christian Life. That we listen to God through Scripture and prayer and are ready to make choices that arise out of our daily discernment.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to become a discerning people—individually and as a group.</p>
<p>To be a compassionate, lawful and inclusive society.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church is the last bulwark against the secularisation of our society by post modernists. this attack is active in three fronts: changes in parliament by legislation (Same-Sex marriage); the social media disregard for the sanctity of marriage, evident by attitudes in TV, Press and CEOs of large companies promoting homosexual and amorphous gender identities; in education through the Safe schools program, flying under the banner of anti-bullying but in the words of its designer "a Marxist ideology to undermine Western civilisation and its institutions."</p>
<p>I hope that Bishop Long’s recent address to priests’ assemblies in Australia and in New Zealand received eager approval generally. I rejoiced at much more than the obvious huge appeal to clerics to think again about how our ‘Church’ in Australia has been operating—he sent out a loud call to us, too—the 99% sometimes called the ‘People of God’ to also wonder if we wish to offer to Council some alternatives to a clerical way. 2. He repeated his former call for women to be actually recognised as a valuable source of a spiritual energy that may smarten up ‘our’ way of being Church—even into the realm of decision-making! (He even dared to claim that we can’t be a real Church without them in the middle of it all!) 3. Now, at Christmas, this pensioner member of the 99% is reflecting on the simple human part of Jesus being born like one of us (and I’m just temporarily putting aside his later ‘rising triumphant’). In life, he didn’t have rules for worthiness to sit with him at table—and I jokingly say, “none of them were Catholics, and probably some of them divorced!”</p>
<p>The Church has had a lot of problems regarding Jesus’s attitude to slaves. There never was a Problem. Imagine Jesus preaching that slavery is evil. Within a very short time, he would have been before Pilate up for sedition or as an enemy of the state. That is Jesus would have no defence because he would have fatality undermine the whole economic basis supporting the Roman Empire. His crucifixion would be carried without him having to spreading his good news. So why the hell is this not put up as the real argument, why Jesus had to avoid this subject, and of course women in leadership? Female Caesars? God forbid! No way was he there to take on the Roman authorities and if God did there would have been no Christianity! What is wrong with the Church explaining about slaves and women? Too bloody occupied with power and BS. No wonder people are turning away. If I am off the script, please straighten me out [ - ]. May God bless you [ - ]. Render onto Caesar what is Caesars.</p>
<p>MY SUBMISSION 1. Clericalism is rampant in our parishes and unless priests are formed to be servants and shepherds and not controlling despots, who control and bully their parishioners the Church will not survive. 2. Celibacy is a weakness and a cause of great concern for the clergy. Not all priests are called to a life of celibacy. And the outmoded reasons for celibacy are no longer valid. Voluntary celibacy needs to be introduced as a matter of urgency. 3. An invitation be given to all priests who have left the priesthood, and who want to, to be given back their faculties to minister as married priests. 4. Married deacons to be given wider involvement in sacramental and pastoral ministry, and used more in delivering sermons. 5. Women deacons need to be introduced, as a prelude to women priests. 6. Clergy should be left to concentrate on their core business of caring for the spiritual life of the people and the running of the parish should be handed over to the laity. 7. The clergy needs to use the gifts of the laity more widely. There is so much more the laity can do besides what they are already doing. Not all priests have the gift of preaching for example. The laity can do some of the preparations for the sacraments, for marriage, the RCIA, write the prayers of the faithful, read the parish notices, etc. 8. Overseas priests need cross cultural training and also help in public speaking as regards delivering sermons. 9. The laity, including women needs to be more broadly accepted and used by the clergy. 10. The clergy and the laity to share power. The role of</p>

parish councils to be reviewed, to have more authority. They are undervalued by the clergy. [ - ] 5 February 2019.
It is time to be inclusive. Own up for the past and promote an environment that is welcoming and safe to all.
To engage more with the youth, most of whom do not come to church any more although they have been brought up in loving Catholic environment, and have attended Catholic primary and high schools. Many of them (whom I personally know) are living good 'Christian' lives in that they are kind and very generous to the less fortunate in terms of giving of their time and finances, but they do not go to church. The sex abuse scandals in the Church and the cover-ups have been the biggest cause that they cite for not going to Mass. If most priests gave homilies that were practical that the youth could relate to, it might engage them more during Mass.
What God is asking from us are: He wants a close relationship between us and Himself, and He also want us to love him with our hearts and souls. God is asking of us that he wants to make the Church all over Australia to make a successful future.
God is asking us, as Church, to be more inclusive in every aspect of the Church, especially, leadership, ministry and worship, and outreach to the young, the old, and all who are marginalised in any way.
God is asking us to be an inclusive, active people. Welcoming of others—whether they be gay, straight, married, single, divorced or separated, male or female, young or old, Catholic or non-Catholic. The diversity of our Church should reflect the diversity of our society. The leadership of our Church should reflect the people of our Church. Therefore, greater involvement from the laity in decision-making processes should exist. Not just in terms of seeking input and feedback, but in actual matters of choice and action. Women should also be reflected in the leadership and given the opportunity to serve as members of the clergy. Priests should be able to marry and have their own families. One of the greatest gifts of the Church is its ministry and service to the community. The work of Catholic schools, hospitals, and charities are pivotal in contributing to our world in positive ways. The work of these organisations and services should be more connected to the spiritual and liturgical experiences of our Church, especially to our parish life, rather than as separate bodies. They truly are the hope of the Church in many ways. God is asking us to be positive, hopeful and celebratory. Which means when people attend Mass, they should experience connection, peace and joy in the messages they receive—rather than negativity, guilt or condemnation from the homily. Many priests spend their time lecturing from the pulpit rather than encouraging or reflecting the “good news” of the day.
To be more tolerant and engage with people needing support.
➤ The beginning and end of Jesus’ Ministry provide us with very clear directives: God is asking us to REPENT and give up sin and then to go out and make disciples of all people ➤ The call is to convert others, by sharing our relationship with Jesus and faith in a loving God, who offers the promise of eternal life to those who live by God’s ways. We are to share with those within and beyond the Church—all are children of God and his love is extended to them. We need to people of the Be-attitudes, to be noticed for being different in our approach to life, our relationships and our service.
- To believe in the power of prayer, and to be people of prayer: individually, within our families, parishes, with other denominations and at times other faiths too. - To be living witnesses to our faith in Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth and the life.
Family Enrichment: As a Catholic mother, I believe that God is asking us to do our best to bring our children up to know, love and serve Him and others in this modern world. We can do this first and foremost by teaching our children about their Catholic Faith, by creating cheerful homes where the children know they are loved for who they are, as well as teaching the children how to be virtuous and strong in this ever-changing world. Children need to learn this through the example and word of their parents. The home can be a source of affection and character training, as well as a beacon that points the way to the Church where we will find Christ. In turn, these parents need to bring this message of hope to other people: the people they meet in their ordinary circumstances each day. It

is very possible to bring up our children to love and know Christ, and thus to serve Him and the others who are about us. I believe that the Holy Spirit is asking the Church to help ordinary families who are in desperate need of both support and formation in the area of family enrichment. This submission is about helping those families who are seeking to bring their children up as well as they can. The Church can initiate this by providing family enrichment formation for parents: formation that will help them to educate their children with confidence, in the growth and practice of the virtues.

Previous generations grew up going to Church with blind faith and trust. Now many question the Church teachings and want scientific proof to enable belief. You add this to the very shameful sexual and financial misconduct of priests, bishops and cardinals and there are no ways parents or grandparents can influence youngsters to attend church. Priests, bishops, cardinals and even the Pope have lost the moral ground (sidelining the Vatican-appointed bishops in China while recognising the Chinese-government appointed bishops, and also laying too much stress on environmental and socialist issues). The above may not be the only reason, but plays a big role in the diminishing regard for the Church and its beliefs in sanctity of traditional marriage, confessional, scourge of abortion, gender diversity, Eucharistic presence in the Blessed sacrament. I am of the belief the Church requires something greater than man can provide to turn the tide around.

I think that God is asking Australians to consider: 1. Why is it that Catholic Education fails to create young adults who practice their faith? I am a Catholic teacher, and taught in Catholic schools for eleven years. I have also been a Catechist for 15 years. I have four Children who have been taught in Catholic schools and know many more children of practicing friends, and none of our children are practicing Catholics now. Teachers seem to know very little about their own faith, and cannot engage with students about issues that really matter to them. There is something very wrong in Catholic education in [ - ], that is not meeting the needs of families and communities. I have a Masters in theology and religious education, and read on theological matters, however, other trainee teachers that I know tell me that they cannot find the answers that they seek from their tutors or lecturers. I am concerned as to why this is. I believe that making religious education relevant to the students' experience is very important, as The Lord himself did. However, teachers stop there. They also need to teach knowledge about our faith, its doctrines, traditions and the theological basis for them, through discussion of encounters and dialogue, which is critical to helping young people understand its significance for their lives. I believe (through my own experience of being a parent and a teacher) that young people are craving for meaning through which they can discover their own identity, God's plan for them and their place in the world. Catholic schools that fail to truly engage with students in the issues that are critical to them, as they strive to find this meaning cannot justify their own existence. A Catholic school cannot simply be a place where students can be schooled in a pleasant and nurturing environment, and become "churched". However, this seems to be what has been happening for at least two decades. I believe that the manner in which the sacraments are administered in schools is partly to blame. I think (again, from my own experience) that children leaving secondary school believe that sacraments and the Church are all part of primary school, and therefore associated with childhood. Once they move into high school, most children no longer go to Mass, and don't see the need, and neither do parents because all the sacraments are over. As a sacrament of Initiation into adulthood, Confirmation should be freely entered into by the candidate. However, as it is currently placed in year 6, nearly all students receive it because their whole class does, and very few have any choice. They are not in a situation to make adult choices about their participation in the Church, and none usually attend Mass later when they are. Confirmation would be better placed later in high school perhaps in year 10, when children are able to choose for themselves. This would mean that their faith would not be a childish thing, to be forgotten in high school.

To teach his people his TRUTH. By this I mean to go back to teaching his truths found in the scriptures and the doctrines and dogmas of the Catholic Church. The Church's prelates need to go back to preaching from the pulpits the truth of God's word in relation to homosexuality,

contraception, same-sex marriage, gender liquidity, remarriage of divorced Catholics to name just a few. The reality of Hell and our knowledge of one's decision where they will spend eternity is such a reality that is not realised by so many Christians especially the youth of today. Knowledge of the sacraments of the Church especially the Eucharist, reconciliation and meaning of the Mass. In my experience, so many Catholics don't know why they go to Mass apart from habit or the fear of going to Hell. The lack of proper catechists to parishioners over the last 50 years is serious especially in the Catholic high schools. Cleric homosexuality needs to be addressed now before more people leave the Church. Truth and transparency are paramount or the Church faces even more dwindling financial support from its people. The Church's people need support and courage from its clergy. We need the clergy to stand up and speak out against the secularism we face every day as the laity. Especially for families sincerely trying to raise their children as strong supporters of the Catholic faith. Bring Christ back into the Church especially our Catholic schools. Due to the problems of child abuse in the past, I think we should seriously evaluate whether children should be serving on the altar at all. A serious and urgent evaluation of the state of the seminaries all over the world is needed. In relation to the sexual abuse, many have faced from their authorities while training. So many questions need to be answered and addressed or I feel a great schism will result in the Church with those who believe we need to address so much false teaching that has infiltrated the teachings of the Church over the last 10 years, to those who would drag the Church back to pre-Vatican II times to the Catholic Church being unrecognizable from any other religion/faith on this earth.

I think God wants us to return to Him in prayer, constant prayer, to offer our lives up to Him. To trust Him completely, to hope in Him and to believe in Him. He wants us to put Him first in our lives. We would do well to return to daily Mass as much as our duties allow, scripture reading, the holy rosary, monthly confession and fasting. We mustn't water things down thinking we can draw others in by making things easier, less restrictive. We need to share our faith experiences with those around us, to be people of hope with a joy in our hearts and knowledge that God is in control over all things and watching over us lovingly with divine intervention and providence. We need to show by our actions and words that we are different and that we live with hope and meaning and purpose, that we know who we are and where we are going and who we belong to. Bring back the Friday abstinence and fasting during Lent, not just Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Bring back all the Holy Days of Obligation.

In the future I would like for the Church in Australia to; a] develop strong leadership from the top down from religious to laity—strong leadership invokes ENERGY—this is needed to restore trust and integrity, b] be a place of WELCOME by addressing injustices of the past and re-engaging with lapsed Catholics who have been disenfranchised by a stance on contraception and divorce, c] increase the role of women e.g. leading to women priests, d] be RELEVANT in our changing environment. Sunday is not a day of rest anymore. Recreation and work of necessity are taking precedence, e] be non-judgemental.

For Church leaders to look anew at the teachings of Jesus in the gospels and learn how to present them as a still relevant way of life for the current generation.

We felt God is asking of us as a group to discover where faith can be found today in the Church.

To look at the attack on the families and how the Catholic Church should make education affordable.

(a) To show we are Catholics by EXAMPLE e.g. follow the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon of the Mount. (b) To put less priority on social media activities and more emphasis on reaching out to the disadvantaged, lonely and those who have health problems in hospitals and aged care facilities. (c) Offering professional advice (e.g. hosting talks), and financial help to encourage YOUTH participation in the Church.

Our group identified a range of thoughts including: - open discussion on bishops' plan for suitable priests in parishes - recognise the damaged reputation of the Church and enlist new cohorts of people into governance of the institution - treat divorced Catholics case-by-case in relation to Communion - respect cultural differences in communities, show tolerance - encourage daily prayer in homes and groups - foster inclusiveness - review which leaders qualify to vote at the Plenary

Council - tackle the looming reality of empty churches within decades - recognise that Mass and sacraments is no longer preferred way of living the faith by a majority of Catholics so engage them in new ways - allow Third Rite of Reconciliation - look at way some religions and faith practices endure and others disappear, consider what we can adopt from other faiths.

Prayer, Adoration of Blessed sacrament, Holy hours Rosary, Reconciliation, Holy Mass, Bible study, Service to Poor. As Catholic Church, we have to Trust in God and cultivate works of Mercy.

- Young people do not find Sunday Mass relevant to their lives. Some may attend Mass but feel no connection to the prayers, Bible readings and sermon. We should inquire into the reasons for the disconnect that keep teenagers and young adults away from Church, and seriously find ways to bridge their concerns and Church practices and teachings.
- The lifestyles of young people today run counter to Church teachings. Living together outside of marriage and the practice of non-natural methods of birth control are not regarded as a sin by many young people and their parents. Could the Church's traditional teachings (e.g. the gospel's strong condemnation of fornication) be interpreted with consideration of today's social and economic realities? Could the emphasis be placed on love and commitment in human relationships rather than offence against this or that teaching?
- The role of women in the Church needs more open-minded discussion, discussion untethered from traditional views of gender roles. In a world where women have access to the same type and level of education as men and where they have proven to be capable of working in the same occupations as men, there is no reason to exclude them from the functions of priest or deacon.
- The language of the Mass and of theology should take into account the knowledge of modern science (e.g. psychology, sociology). This could pave the way to higher attendance at Mass as people see the relevance of the Church's prayers and forms of community worship to their everyday lives.
- Confession via the third rite (with General Absolution) could replace, or be given the same validity as, individual confession (except in cases of mortal sin). More lapsed Catholics would possibly feel encouraged to return to the fold.
- The rule that divorced Catholics not be allowed to receive Holy Communion is unfair to Catholic divorcees who did not want divorce and whose behaviour did not provide grounds for divorce. Some flexibility is needed in applying what appears to be a blanket rule.
- There should be more acceptance and less condemning, of gay/lesbian relationships. The devotion between two long-term partners in such relationships should be acknowledged as a sign of love.
- We have been taught that Sunday Mass attendance is a duty, and not attending is a sin. What about people who have to work on Sundays, not through choice but because of the nature of their work, like those manning emergency services? Perhaps the Church should consider adjusting its rules to take into account the circumstances of modern life, like it has done with the rules regarding fasting and meatless Fridays.
- God could be asking us to accept married priests as well as celibate.
- The teaching about primacy of conscience needs to be more fully explained to the laity, so the faithful has a deeper understanding of its meaning and avoids falling into the belief that one can follow one's conscience and act against the Church's teachings.

We need to do all we can to restore the role that the Church previously held in Society. We need to lead by example, becoming the change we want to see in the world. Where the Church has fallen behind, apologies need to be made and we truly demonstrate that we have learnt from our mistakes. The Church needs present a strong front in the media, unashamedly spreading the joy of the gospel. When the Church suggests an alternate path, it is important to explain why we are choosing such a path. Filled with the message of joy and faith of the gospel, we need to have a positive vision and a clear roadmap. We need to truly follow the footsteps of Jesus and evangelise to all, being far more welcoming and embracing of all people. We need to reform the hierarchy of the Church to move from structures to a missionary focus that embraces all peoples.

Prayer/Practice/Liturgy

- We felt the community desires to know the Bible more personally, so as to grow in faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ.
- To have available Adoration, encourage families to pray together
- For our priests to encourage and reinforce teachings of Church and to encourage sacraments so each person can reach their true holiness in Jesus Christ.

Faith Formation/Catholic Education:

- A preparation course for parents needs to run simultaneously as children prepare for sacraments.
- Confirmation needs to be at an older age, 16years old to keep the teenagers involved in the faith and parish.
- Consider countries like Singapore as a reference point for teaching Catechism.
- Parents need to focus on their child's faith development rather than leaving it to teachers, school and priests.
- Bible study course needed to be more accessible and extensive
- Making Eucharist the focus. Understanding its central importance. Reverence needed at Eucharist time. We need to teach this to the young.

Youth:

- Main issue of the need to attract the youth in a way that relates to today's society and is relevant to their everyday lives. - Educating and invigorating the youth in the tradition of our faith in a method that the youth can easily understand and have access to e.g. social media and apps. - Enable and encourage youth to be a part of and serve the Church through giving them a greater opportunity to become involved in parish groups and communities, so that they may feel that they belong and have a place in the community - We need to ascertain why so many young people choose to stay away from the Church and we need to boldly try to ascertain answers through surveys on social media.

Laity:

1. Personal witness of laity is important. E.g. Courage to speak without fear, share our faith, live as an authentic Christian community. 2. Greater involvement of the laity in decision-making in the Church. 3. Hospitality and inclusion is important. E.g. Have a welcoming group. 4. Find ways to bring back lapsed Catholics.

Jesus' mission for the Church is for us to go out to all the world and spread the news of the Gospel. His message of Love to the world. During those last few weeks of his life Jesus also gave the Church all the sacraments. Only priests can validly confer these. We need to make it easier to access the sacraments. My nephew asked for his child to be baptised. The local parish priest wanted him and his partner to basically complete an RCIA type program—it hasn't happened. Why couldn't the Church have just embraced the new child? Aboriginal culture is still coming to terms with colonisation and racism and trying to preserve something from the dreaming. God is asking the Church to reach out to Aboriginal peoples and deliver what only she can, the sacraments. Delivered freely and easily.

To understand and accept our baptism. To grow continually in our faith. To come to understand who I am. To come to love each other. To become a missionary, i.e., to bring the good news to others. Bring people to the Lord (non-believers and lapsed Catholics). Consecrated lives/Church. Inform and teach. To lead people back to the Church. To become closer to God and strengthen our faith. To educate people the importance of faith relationship with God through the Mass. Response to modern life issues—coherent and confident answers must be provided to parishioners who can then defend the Church's teachings in public areas.

- build better equipped youngsters Apostolate—families is key—parenting sessions (age-based), friend circles, informal talks.

Eucharist—care and reverence for the Holy Eucharist—observed weaknesses in practices

- not duly protecting and cleaning of any hosts dropped on the floor

- training of ministers Liturgical Integrity

- respect for the Mass - ministers must be informed of Mass

Clericalism

- a way to correct priests

- understood process to bring up grievances

- clear process for raising complaints about management of parish, incl. parish priest shortcomings

- strained relations of parishioners and parish priest God want us to come together as one family

Participate more on Church activities Encourage young people to be active in the Church Share your

<p>talent, treasure and time organise more charismatic prayer assemblies that would be attractive to non-practicing Catholics. Explain more the purpose of the Mass.</p>
<p>RCIA class for new Catholics should have baptism in first year and confirmation on second year. God is asking us to get to know Him better and open our hearts to welcome Him. Issues with homosexuality in the clergy. Sexual assault on children and young adults in the Church. (Abuse of) Power of priest in the parish. Improper use of the pulpit. Concern that the Church is not filled with the next generation of Catholics. God is asking us to be more committed, focused and involved in the Church activities. Respect at Mass, Uphold the truth of the gospel, and reading the Bible should be encouraged. Pope's changes to dogma, doctrine! Giving communion to divorced, remarried Catholics, etc. Ten commandments to be emphasised in our lives and to be used to defend against online attacks. Make available and accessible books and literature about our faith.</p>
<p>- In this time of crisis in the Church, what is the way Forward? - Is leadership of the Church, currently solely the bishops, the correct model for the modern world? The Church needs to embrace the laity. - I am greatly influenced by the [ - ] Sisters who had no hesitation in involving the laity in Governance when they felt the time was right. - Greater involvement of the laity in governance of the Catholic Church in Australia. Supreme governance could be by a Council comprised of bishops, Clergy and the Laity, to replace the bishops Conference. - Increased role of Women in the life, including officialdom of the Church. - Greater accountability of Diocesan Leadership. For example, in the event of gross failure in governance or scandal in a Diocese, the Leadership should change; i.e. the Archbishop (if applicable) and other bishops to resign. Note the action of the Board Chairman and CEO of the National Australia Bank, following release of the Royal Commissioner's Report into banking and financial services. - Some outreach program outside the parish, to help others. - Liaise with our local parishes of [ - ], [ - ] on faith and outreach. - Start a Men's group in our parish for us and local parishes. - Renewal of Faith courses to be made available. - Can we find a place in our hearts and accept the divorced person, and the gay people? The Church needs to show mercy and not judge. - How can we get the young back to Church? - We need more community building. - Welcoming committees in each Church. - Outreach programs—something outside the Church. - Teachers in Catholic schools must have Christian values. - I believe that God has always asked us to do what he has always asked us to do, which is to follow Jesus' teachings and "Love one another". "God is, has always been and will always be." This teaching can be brought into action in many ways—1) To show mercy to those who "do not deserve it", 2) To help others without wanting anything in return, 3) To guide others or support them in their faith, 4) To forgive as you have been forgiven, 5) To come together as one just as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. - To bring about equality between men and women in the governance of the Church - No to women priests. - Hold "renewal of faith" courses in parishes every couple of years. - Offer some sort of program to keep young people involved in the Church. - Priests need to be and work among the people, not think they are rulers of a parish or be put on a pedestal. They need to understand that they are shepherds and servants of the Church. They also need our respect. And they need more fellowship with other priests and laity so that they are not lonely. - More women study Theology, so could give Homilies. - God asks "Why have you abandoned me?"</p>
<p>I'm very sure that God is concerned about the turmoil and devastation around the World today. God would ask us to be genuine in our Prayers and thoughts of Faith ... The World today has taken a very negative step in many ways ... People's attitudes to various People of other Nations ... The terrorism within the World is worrying every Person and Australians whilst not normally being Racist have been making a lot of unneeded comments that don't help anybody ... My Faith is always been with me but is at its strongest now ... We need to get back to our Faith and the sacraments on a regular basis. We need to be Proud to be Catholics and live by the teachings of Jesus.</p>
<p>'I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full' John 10:10. Pope St John Paul II spoke of the "genius of women" in his 1995 Letter to Women; also saying we need "to let this genius be more fully expressed in the life of society as a whole, as well as in the life of the Church". He also discerned that "Transcending the established norms of His own culture, Jesus treated women with</p>

openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way He honoured the dignity which women have always possessed according to God's plan and His love". We are all called to honour our inherent dignity and worth so that we can flourish using our God-given gifts. This invitation is for all of us as one human family. Yet we also need to remember, as Pope St John XXIII stated: "We are not on earth to guard a museum but to cultivate a flourishing garden of life". As people of faith, we are all called to build the Kingdom of God and to proclaim the 'good news' as missionary disciples; or as Pope Francis said in Gaudete et Exsultate, we are all called to Holiness. With this point in mind, I call on the Feminine Divine so the Universal Church (so, not only the Catholic Church in Australia) can recognise, embrace and celebrate the "genius of women" (in all our diversity) through more welcoming and inclusive practices. 'For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek; there is no longer slave or free; there is no longer male or female—for you are all one in Christ Jesus' Galatians 3:27–28 'So for anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation: the old order is gone and a new being is there to see' 2 Corinthians 5:17 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit' Romans 15: 13. As guided by the wisdom of St Catherine of Siena: "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire".

I think the bishops do not have enough authority over priests that use their priesthood as a power. Women are not respected and many priests believe that they are superior to women. Priests still appear to believe that they are in some position of power. They are losing the respect of their congregation and not taking on board the teachings of Jesus or the pope.

To listen with open hearts to the needs of minorities and social justice movements, and to actively support such movements when they encourage acceptance and love. To share the Catholic cornerstone teaching that the Word is for everybody, and to make our community as welcoming and non-judgemental as possible, so that nobody raised in or discovering the Faith feels like an outsider. Especially LGBT youth who fear that they will be hated for their identities.

At the most fundamental level of our inner selves, I believe, 'God is asking us', now, as always, to apply His Gospel values in every aspect of our existence (thoughts, words and actions) to help us in our struggle to find the freedom to choose what is good and right in all circumstances, according to our God-given sense of God's Will. I believe Christ's mission to transform humanity relates to all the guidance and support He has provided, in its many forms, to provide direction and spiritual strength to help in our uniquely individual struggles to transform our most basic instincts and tendencies to strive for self-satisfaction and personal gain. I believe the Church, as the people of God, has the most critical role in prosecuting this mission in the most meaningful and explicit way it can—as Jesus exemplified by His words and actions during His Public Ministry—including by making His most basic messages understandable and relevant to His listeners, then, through parables about vineyards, fathers and shepherds. Conversations with many fellow practising Catholics (and observing apparent attention levels at Mass) suggest that attendance at and attention to the various liturgies in Mass does not effectively achieve its mission, especially with a ceremonial structure and style that has to reach, teach and satisfy the greatly diverse needs of such heterogeneous congregations within Australia and beyond. Christ's instruction, '... to teach all nations ...' was simple, but the implications for an institution devoted to its mission are broad and complex without measure.

[ - ] / [ - ] submissions to the Plenary Council 15.2.2019 What do you think God is asking of us in Australia?

Submission 1. We think parishes should encourage involvement of the parish school children and parents as well as run strong youth groups to nurture our youth and form them and to encourage visitation of the community to the elderly and to include them.

Submission 2. We think God is asking us to work for unity:

- ü Equality for all people regardless of race, creed or colour
- ü Unity of purpose in identifying what needs to be changed
- ü The understanding and the will to achieved the necessary changes
- ü Unity from the bishops and some action

<p>ü Stronger leadership from the bishops so we can follow them.</p>
<p>To be accepting, to respect human dignity, to follow the example of Jesus Christ, to spread his message.</p>
<p>Become Saints (each one of us!) and bring people closer to us closer to God.</p>
<p>I believe we need the Church to become more community based and to have the Church more approachable.</p>
<p>We think God is asking us to be still, listen to him and each other. To be tolerant, accepting and understanding of each other and to place our trust in Him.</p>
<p>Improve and modernise the governance of the Church.</p>
<p>WHAT DO YOU THINK GOD IS ASKING OF US IN AUSTRALIA AT THIS TIME? I feel God is asking us to Trust in Him ... Through actively witnessing our Faith within our parish Community. I see each weekend a gap between our youth and our Senior parishioners who are attending Mass and in their own way trying to serve our parish. Our Youth I feel is being cared for with programmes; meetings; prayer and Mass attendance ... therein within the groups, lies our life in our parish, and hopefully growing with the Youth. Each week I am in awe of our Seniors who are active in various Ministries giving witness to parish life. They are always ready to help knowing they are serving God. We have to realise that our Seniors are not going to be able-bodied for long, even though their spirit is willing. Yes, they/we are retired and have time to share with the parish. But what we have to realise is they are the very group that have been active for a good 20/25 years ... They have and continue to serve and trust that God will be by their sides whilst serving in the parish. I know that is what I believe in. Our young are to an extent being mentored by what they witness each week ... and I feel they are witnessing a group of faith committed people who won't be around for long! Our Catholic life has gone through huge changes and will continue to, so it is important that our community try to understand that whilst these setbacks have caused disillusionment, we still have to continue to trust that God will guide us through these turbulent times. Dialogue within our community could be fruitful or destructive, it is up to us who believe and trust, to hold our ground to witness God's Wisdom and Love. My limited involvement in a parish ministry has made me aware that whilst many of our parishioners are willing to volunteer... I feel there is still a huge potential to increase the level of commitment. Our parish is blessed to have a large cohort of individuals and families, who are at the stage of their lives focusing on their careers, caring for their growing families and ensuring their school aged children are nurtured and loved. How can we encourage this group to not only volunteer but to commit themselves to share their talents? So... How do our Clergy, parish staff, co-ordinators, volunteers continue to build a vibrant community? I know I have no answers, but feel that I have to continue to Trust that God will send His Servants in His Time! I close with this passage from Jeremiah 17 5-8 ... "A blessing on the man who puts his trust in the Lord, with the Lord for his hope. He is like a tree by the waterside that thrusts its roots to the stream: when the heat comes it feels no alarm, its foliage stays green: it has no worries in a year of drought, and never ceases to bear fruit ..."</p>
<p>I believe God is asking us in Australia to go back to our Basic roots of our faith. "Giving the TRUE Authentic BELIEF and Reverence to our LORD GOD. I believe God is calling us to begin with GOD again. We MUST bring back the TRUE dignified meaning of the first 3 commandments 1. I am Your Lord Your GOD 2. Keep Holy Your God's name 3. Keep Holy Your God's day. This sums up everything. God is asking Australia to go back to Basics and to show once again reverence and true love towards our God. We need to first Love and show respect to our GOD we claim that we believe in before we can carry out anything else in the Church and community at large. God is asking us to truly Love HIM again. HOW? God is asking that we begin at our HOLY MASS. We as Catholics believe that the Holy Mass is the "SOURCE and SUMMIT" of our authentic belief and Faith. God is asking us to start here, in the CHURCH. God is asking us to TRULY believe in HIS "TRUE PRESENCE" God is asking us to TRULY show in our Actions that we believe in HIS "TRUE PRESENCE" God is asking us to bring back the HOLY REVERENCE and worship that is truly from a heart of LOVE. God is asking us to teach and bring back the gift of Holy Fear of the Lord. God is asking us to stop the disintegration of the liturgy which is our</p>

<p>"landing pad" The Holy Mass is the very Source and Summit of our faith. We must bring Holiness back. We must add silence. Encourage appropriate attire. Encourage proper reception of communion by kneeling and on the tongue. Offer a communion rail. Add more Latin into the Mass. Stop the use of extraordinary ministers. Use more incense. Eliminate the sign of peace. Encourage social gathering and welcome outside the house of worship. Encourage devotions to Mother Mary and special feast days. Encourage more Adoration in the Presence of the Blessed sacrament. Say the St Michael Prayer after each Mass. Encourage family rosary.</p>
<p>To begin a faith formation for all Catholics to become mature Christians. To have a post baptism catechumenate which would involve all family members. I propose the Neocatechumenal way as a model which I have experienced. To have small groups i.e. less than 50 to form communities that can grow to love each other overtime, by weekly meeting for celebration of the word and a weekly Eucharist. If possible, to have a priest walk with the community as a part of it. When the children of the communities reach a mature age, they can leave their parents' communities and enter their own. Eventually those walking in the communities should reach a faith maturity such that they can enter the mission that all Catholics are called, to announce the Gospel to a world that is waiting for it. They can also be a service to the parish by helping with marriage preparation, post confirmation catechises and other parish mission activities.</p>
<p>We need to admit the need for deep and serious change. We need to listen to Pope Francis in his calls for a Church that is more humble, more compassionate, closer to the people. We need to invite people in, not exclude them because they aren't perfect. We need a Church that "guides consciences, not replaces them". We need our leaders to acknowledge that they need to listen to the "wisdom of the people", because on their own they don't seem to have done very well. We need laity to have real involvement and influence in the Church, particularly women.</p>
<p>I think God is asking the Christian community to connect with the wider community to support others to live kind and generous lives, without judgement, that support a healthier community. Through the leadership of the Church, each and every one of us ought to be encouraged to be more like Jesus in our everyday lives. There are so many 'lost' people in the world who are in need of help and there are many people who would be mobilised to assist if they had the leadership to guide them.</p>
<p>To reform the Church and refocus on the needs of others, especially the poor and disadvantaged.</p>
<p>Our group discussed that in Australia at this time God is asking us to the formation of post-baptismal catechumenate in which each baptised Catholic can discover their own personal journey to faith and be trained in holiness. Our group discussed how often family life, educational institutes (including Catholic ones) and even parish Mass can sometimes feel very isolating and detached from personal experiences and growth of faith. It was chiefly through post-baptismal catechumenate that provided an opportunity to discover personal faith experience in which the liturgies of the Church are not separate from daily life, but become a way to understand the history of faith that God is doing in each of us, individually.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will the Church deal with Islam and global attacks on Christianity, such as Christmas, Easter celebrations? A policy and action plan needs to be developed.</li> <li>• How will the Church deal with the nullification of faith? Our Catholic schooling system, particularly high schools needs a plan/instruction from the Church to strengthen the desire of young teenagers to remain in the Church when they leave school. Also, the Clergy needs to encourage parishioners to learn and understand the Faith by preaching some details of what it means. Arousing the "Kingdom within" and their participation with the Mass.</li> <li>• Global expansion of Islam seems only to be respected/uncriticised for its actions of violence.</li> <li>• Why are women not allowed to be Acolytes?</li> <li>• When will the Church permanently defrock paedophile priests i.e. Cardinal McCarrick? Is there a clear policy?</li> <li>• How do you intend to respond to the problem of an ageing population in the priesthood and in congregations?</li> <li>• How do you intend on using the media to challenge/oppose the negative reporting of the controversies that have/are occurring in the Church? How to fix the image problem?</li> <li>• Do individual parishes/all parishes need to establish a project which will help them re-</li> </ul>

connect with the community? For example, Local soup kitchen on a weekly basis i.e. Saturday morning. Fully implement the present strategic plan not being taken up particularly reaching out to others i.e.: non-Catholics. • How does the Church intend to promote stewardship of the planet—pollution, excess consumption, materialism, waste. • The Church must train parish priests to be able to manage a parish—finances, people. The Church is an organization that requires priests to have management and organization skills before being promoted to being a parish priest. It is like a large company. • There should be stronger liturgy training for Acolytes, Readers, Special Ministers and Altar Servers i.e. Scripture study/liturgy study. • Should there be a code of dress for Special Ministers and Acolytes? i.e. Black shoes, black pants and white shirt • More leadership qualities in the clergy. • Dress Code: Eucharistic Ministers/Lectors should be respectfully dressed. • Gospel values have to be kept by the Church. • The Council should be focusing on family values, youth and should be guided by reason, authentic tradition and the principles of the Gospel. • The family life is under attack from: Secular society/Technological Age/Relationship difficulties/Economic structures/hardships. What are the answers? How should the Catholic faith be passed on? Focus on parent’s responsibilities and show what they should be doing. Should we expect immediate results? • Families are under the false illusion of what is true success! They are—Ambitious for the lower gifts—(values misplaced) St. Paul said be ambitious for the higher gifts. How to teach children to take it seriously? A parental responsibility mainly. A plan is needed.

I think He's asking us to have compassion and understanding for people who are less privileged than us. We should be using the abundance of resources we have to bring those in poverty/at risk out of those situations and try to raise their standard of living.

Re priests in parishes: ensure they have access to spiritual director and supervisor assist them in where necessary, in preparing homilies where English is their second language, give them access to English speaking classes for men coming from other cultures, provide enculturation processes (as is given to those going from Australia to other cultures) assist priests from other countries in understanding of the Australian culture assist Australian priests in understanding the multiculturalism of their parishioners.

We think God is asking of us in Australia at this time for a deeper, closer encounter with the Lord, with more formation for not just children, but for teachers and parents. We think God wants of us to be more engaged in Public schools and introduce Religious Education programs even in Public schools. We want ongoing R.E. for high school years as well, Yr 7–12. We also want to be able to profess our faith more openly in public by way of processions and devout practices more visible. We want our Church communities to be like the early Christians—building solid relationships and stronger communities. We want our young people to be more actively engaged in Church. We want our Church to be a witnessing Church, to be bold and not ashamed of our faith. To have as lengthy confessional lines as we do for Holy Communion—to have a sense of sin and accountability. We want our Catholic schools to be more 'Catholic'. To have frequent adoration, daily Rosary, Praise and Worship at lunch/Recess breaks, Social outreaches as youth reaching to the poor through food banks/school. We need to grow in intimacy with the Lord through more opportunities of revival in our spirit by way of frequent bi-annual retreats, life in the Spirit seminars, talks on chastity and purity, and radical ways of living our faith. Out of great love for God, we must be able to pray as one and work for the less fortunate. Stemming out of gratitude we must spend time in Kairos, quiet reflection and then be doers of the Word—acting in love and supporting our local farmers, lending our voices to address climate change even! and lending to foreign aid. We need to be bold and sincere and loving enough even to work for the conversion of souls and active evangelisation.

We thought that God is asking the Church in Australia to promote a post-baptismal catechumenate. In other words, to implement fruitful and enriching adult-faith formations in the parishes. For example, my group is part of the Neocatechumenal way in the parish of [ - ] in [ - ]. The adult faith formation is practiced through catechesis and being part of a Christian community. Each of us were able to receive initial catechesis before we joined a community; this already gave as a solid foundation for the faith to begin to grow. In addition to this, our community meets twice a week;

one day for a celebration of the Word of God and the other day on a Saturday night to celebrate the Eucharist. This ongoing formation and gathering allows us to nurture our faith through the liturgy, the Word of God, and living in a Christian community. We have learned to listen to the Word of God and apply it to our everyday life. Through various catechesis and ongoing formation, we have learned and are still learning to place ourselves, our problems, our hopes, inside the Word of God. This has been immensely helpful and fruitful. Having a fruitful and enriching adult faith formation, such as the Neocatechumenal way, is at the heart of developing a relationship with Christ.

Holiness, courage, indifference to the opinions of the world. Real faith in Catholic schools by recognizing that young people are drawn to boldness and sincerity and clear orthodox teaching bishops, not priests giving confirmation and re-introducing the slap—how can we be soldiers for Christ if we are not trained to be, and if we don't expect to be ridiculed or ignored in the eyes of the world? Boldness in proclaiming the gospel. Sermons about hell and the effects of sin. Sermons on how to be holy and the lives of the saints. Sermons on how to defeat the devil. Sermon on the need for regular confession and under what circumstances are we to receive communion. Sermons encouraging people to write to their MPs on euthanasia and abortion and to attend prayer vigils outside abortion clinics—and for our priests, and those obedient to them, to be prepared to be arrested for it. Discouraging priests thanking people for coming to Mass—(this is a defeatist mentality—remember the serpent's head is already crushed—we are not doing the priest a favour, he is granting us the huge favour. Re-introducing the prayer to St Michael at the end of each Mass. Martyrdom and Beatification of our bishops. Faith formation in teens, adolescents and adults. Recognition that the world catechises the ways of the world more effectively than we catechise about Jesus Christ—how does it do this? Through the culture—so what must we be? Radically counter cultural, as Jesus was. Mandatory for all parish priests to have either one of the following in their parish: Neocatechumenal way, a charismatic covenant community, perpetual Eucharistic Adoration or the Focolare in each parish—preferably all four. Recognition that in this culture the parish as a transmitter of faith is dead or dying. The parishes that are thriving have at least one of the four above. Recognition that in this culture, the Catholic school as a transmitter of faith is dead or dying, at sometimes an obstacle to faith, as the "faith" that is presented is weak and contemptible. The students are flattered and told how great they are. Boldness in speaking out on homosexual and transgender sins—and being prepared to be arrested for it. Clarity on the Church's position on the use of transgender pronouns—a clear statement like the American bishops have done. Support of the priests—no priests living alone, priests belonging to a vibrant faith community. A real presence in all Universities—remember how the society of St Vincent de Paul was formed—in response to a debate in a university. Proper hymns—strong words and strong melodies. Priests to insist on reverence before during and after Mass—no chatting. Public expressions of faith like processions on Christ the King and on Marian feast days—we are no longer called to be proud of our faith—deep down a lot of us are ashamed, which is an offence against our confirmation vows where we say we are proud of our faith.

I am a priest, and I see how we may take our position and role for granted, because we are not "hired and fired". I believe we need to be held accountable to our communities and to the Church in general. People want to have the best out of a doctor or a teacher, and these people are reviewed, their performance is routinely assessed, their contracts depend on these assessments. Why should people settle for a low-quality performance from a priest as a pastoral worker? I remember how often I saw seminarians taking their studies and formation easy, knowing that they would have been promoted anyway provided they did not cause scandals. How would they get a job if they were to apply like anyone else? I think that we need to have a look at our understanding (Theology?) of the priesthood. The question is: should governance be tied to the sacrament of Order? It certainly can [be], but should it? Can it become the ordinary thing that governance is given to those who are proved capable of yielding it, irrespective of their being lay or clerics? If this is the case, bishops could appoint pastoral coordinators for parishes who need not be priests, and need not be men either, with the full authority that is presently given to a parish priest. Priests could also apply, of

course. The community should have its say, both in the appointment and in the assessment of the performance of the person appointed. All, lay and clerics alike, would have to undergo professional development and supervision. A priest would know that he is in danger of "losing his job", just like everyone else, and so also his source of income. Priests would probably get roles that are more suited to their personality, aptitudes and professional training—not all are naturally suited to be parish priests, or preachers, or spiritual directors. Revisiting the Theology of priesthood has the potential of holding priests accountable and their skills up-to-date. In the end, priests would probably experience a more focussed, purposeful and meaningful life and ministry within their calling. And the role of the laity would be highly enhanced.

It happens at times that communities are confused when their parish priest—or pastoral coordinator—is transferred and a new one is appointed. I acknowledge that changes are often necessary even when at least part of the community does not seem to see the point at first. I also understand that it is the theology of the priesthood and the authority given to the parish priest by Canon law that allows him to possibly trash everything that was done before he came and start anew. I understand that this may at times be necessary. My question is: Can we have policies in place so that the priest can voice his concerns, and the community can do the same, and there is a check over sudden changes? At times, we have seen how communities that were doing reasonably well were disturbed by the changes that a priest carried out as soon as he moved in, and people were alienated by such actions. Can we have policies in place so that changes can be made if they are really needed, but also stayed if they may be the result of hurry, or even of prejudices and mere personal preferences? I should probably say that I am a parish priest myself.

One scourge we experience is the fact that our Church, especially in the English-speaking world, is strongly polarised. Catholics who are active in their faith take sides and have strong opinions in the so-called cultural wars. While it is totally legitimate to have one's convictions, and strong ones, it is unhealthy that we stick labels on one another and effectively insulate ourselves from the insight that may come to us from the Catholics who hold opinions different from ours. "Progressive", "conservative", "traditionalist", "liberal", "Taliban", "medieval", "pagan" are all labels that we quickly apply in our mind as soon as we hear something that sounds like the favourite topic of the "other tribe". Because this is what it looks like: a tribal war. I am convinced that I need a different approach. The Catholics who holds views different from mine are not my enemies. They are my brothers and sisters. If they hold a different view, they may have reasons for it. Even when their view is clearly at odds with some tenets of our faith and morals, their reason is where I should shine the light. If they see that I genuinely want to know their reasons and understand them, receive their concerns and address them, perhaps they will also be willing to understand my reasons and address my concerns. The Holy Spirit unites, does not divide. It is painful when at times we see that even we priest and bishops, as leaders, engage in divisive ways and disconnect from the genuine humanness and Catholicity of those whom we regard as our opponents. I believe the Lord is definitely calling us to shine the light of charity upon this present predicament. The greater danger for the Church does not come from external forces, but from internal divisions and errors.

I had once a Catholic Aboriginal woman telling me that the mainstream Church does not work for Aboriginal people. There has to be allowances for them to fit in. I was not born in Australia, I have been here for less than 5 years as of now. I would love to know of ways to make Aboriginal people feel welcome to our community, and tried myself in various ways, spending much of my time and some parish resources for this purpose (I am a parish priest). The result is not much, to be honest. I believe the Church needs to be open to experiment with ways that the Aboriginal community may believe suitable to their culture. Perhaps it is easier in areas where Aboriginal people are the majority, while it is harder where they are a tiny minority of the parish population.

<p>- To have a Post baptismal Catechumenate. - Training in Holiness. - To Evangelize. - To have a liturgy of the word. - To have a Post Confirmation Program for the youth of the parish. - To have faithful priests. - To do Morning Prayer in the Family. - To have a shrine to the Virgin Mary.</p>
<p>A new beginning with more open communication between clergy and laity. A cleansing ritual of the sins and omissions of the past and an opening ritual of openness to the Holy Spirit. Valuing the contribution of all Gods people and enabling their voices to be heard. Support for the clergy especially in the vast country areas. Renewal programs in foundational theology and educational programs open to all. Clarification and discussion on current issues facing the laity and the Church's hierarchical stance on previously held beliefs.</p>
<p>To consider evangelizing through a Post baptismal Catechumenate to bring people to experience the love of God in their lives through training in holiness.</p>
<p>I imagine that God is seeing the shift in thinking within our society to be more accepting of our diversity and differences and that he is hoping the Church will also be more tolerant. I think God is asking us to keep having faith and to be more understanding, accepting and compassionate towards others in our growing diverse country. To show empathy and understanding to those that need it the most. We should be inclusive and accepting of all in our Church community. To lead the way and be role models to the younger generation. I think God is asking us in Australia to be more loving, trusting, caring and compassionate towards each other. This will show our belief and faith in God. I think God is asking us to put kindness first. To live a life with strong faith in God, with hope that everything is possible with Him and to live with love for one another.</p>
<p>To focus more on transmission of the faith, and a real faith experience, rather than just Catholic education, in Catholic schools.</p>
<p>I think that God is asking us as a global community to stop, reflect, listen and to be an inclusive community regardless of race, religion and all the biases that we as individuals use because we sometimes live and respond out of fear rather than love.</p>
<p>Be more vocal on tough moral issues—preaching the truth with compassion. I think God is asking us to trust in his Church and the teachings of the Church. The priesthood needs to be strengthened and priests (Persona Christi) need to be empowered to teach on the Church's position when it comes to tough moral issues. To preach the truth with genuine compassion.</p>
<p>To live as Christians, by believing in Christ's teachings, loving one another, being kind and generous and treat others with respect. That our priests and Leaders be taught to journey with the people through abundant and trying conditions. That our priests and leaders be well versed in preaching practices. That the receiving of the sacraments be the same in all our parishes e.g. Bread and Wine by mouth.</p>
<p>To deliver the sacraments and really good formation. I have been going to some Opus Dei recollections and they are really informative. I seem to have missed out on a lot of knowledge about my faith even though I attended a Catholic school for 12 yrs.</p>
<p>We need to have courage and fortitude to uphold God's truth. We are being called to live radical lives and not be timid amid the growing voices that lead to confusion and chaos in our communities. The growing number of issues that don't value life, transgender issues, poor parenting, drugs and self-satisfying practices that don't reflect Gods values of living lives of service and sacrifice are diminishing families. We need the Church to be a place where families want to come and hear the truth and be encouraged in the struggles of the world.</p>
<p>I believe that God is asking us to reconnect with the faith. The Church seems to be full of wanting to seek and teach social justice issues but bypassing learning deeply the faith, our Catholic history and prayer ... and passing that on to the next generation first. Everything else springs from that. Also, there has been an over feminisation of the faith in how it is expressed and taught that is making it difficult to connect young men to the faith in particular. Catholicism has always been based in faith and reason, over 2000 years we have produced some of the greatest philosophers, apologists and theologians that have ever lived and our youth seem to know none of this—what they learn of the Church seems to be focused on what they learn from the media and repeated in the classrooms and</p>

sermons (abuse scandals, abuses in crusades, anti-science—Galileo, agonisingly bad Church music, inquisition, apparent Church "misogyny", out of touch etc.)—how can we expect our youth to be attracted to Christ and the Church if that is all they hear? I believe that we need a greater focus on the strengths and dispel the slanted view of the Church with truth—the Church is not misogynistic but upholds the dignity of women more than any other institution, the crusades did so some bad things but overwhelmingly defended Christian Europe against all odds against an aggressive invader, grounded in the belief that God is reason some of the greatest scientific discoveries were enabled by the Catholic Church including the development of the scientific method and many other things, schools for the poor, the hospital system, it was Catholicism that pulled Europe out of the dark ages after the barbarian invasions, the much maligned inquisition is the basis and the first time individuals were able to defend themselves assisted by counsel and face their accusers, etc. etc. Many of the greatest things we take for granted in our society today come through faith in Christ, living by his ways and through the Church. Finally, I think that God is asking for loyalty to him and his teaching—to stop the seemingly endless clamouring for changes (women priests, contraception, divorce and remarriage, etc.). Religion is about conforming ourselves to the will God and growing in Him, and NOT adjusting the Church and its teachings to suit our preferred lifestyles, where is the growth in that?

To be like his Son, Jesus. Open minded, loving and all embracing.

I think that God is asking us at this time to respond to the increasingly anti-Christian culture that we live in, that every day encroaches more on our freedom and through the mass media is indoctrinating the young and old to believe that matters of sexuality are a purely private matter bearing no moral consequences, and pursuing the corruption of the young through pornography and toxic gender theory at schools and universities, and to the way in which this culture is encroaching into the Church and the hierarchy of the Church.

To build a Church faith community of mercy and love with diversity of all people. To build a faith Christian community of good works and character which includes the fruits of the spirit and has processes of accountability and authenticity in the body of Christ. To build more robust and supportive communities of faith to cope with the attacks and fragmentation of society, family, extended family, and unstable employment so that people can support each other in groups against the everyday challenges which divide and alienate people from each other.

To be the leaven in the bread of society, bringing the face of Christ to the world, sharing the Good News with all people of goodwill. We need to be a Church that is: • A Church that has credibility with the people of society. The Church through the Institutional Child abuse scandal has damaged its reputation. Schools and health and welfare agencies managed by lay people are recognized as worthwhile organizations. Clerical brand is most damaged. Lack of women in leadership roles, including priesthood, contrasts with Catholic Social Teaching which emphasizes equality and justice. Church is seen as being hypocritical and out of touch with reality of modern organizations moving towards equality. • A Church that is accountable and transparent in its decision-making processes and financial dealings. Educated, informed and involved lay people are required for this to happen. Also, demands acknowledgement and respect for the qualifications of lay people to have meaningful input and influence within the Church structures at parish, diocesan and national level. • A Church that is in touch with the critical issues facing Australian society. Growing openness to the reality of ordinary people's lives through engagement with them in their daily experiences. Particularly, reaching out to people who are poor or living on the margins of our society, isolated by social, economic or political structures. Engagement in issues of social justice such as refugees and environment. Engagement in moral issues such as bioethics and sanctity of life • A Church that builds unity. People working together rather than against each other through open dialogue which allows all voices to be heard rather than one dominant perspective silencing others. Working with other Christian Churches on issues and projects to build Ecumenism • A Church that is participatory and collaborative. The power base of the Church needs to be broadened to give laity more authority in making decisions that will impact on people's lives. Bishops need to be models of servant Church

listening to the needs of the people, teaching and governing in collaboration with the priests and people of the Church. Move from authoritarian clericalism and dogmatism to participatory and collaborative decision-making on pastoral matters. • A Church that advocates for and with those who are poor. Where the Church does this it is recognized as having integrity and worth. It is the core message of the Gospel and without involvement of all the people of the Church in engagement with those who are poor the Church is never fully Christ like. “The gospel can never be fully preached unless there is action for justice in the world” Gaudium et Spes • A Church which celebrates what is Christ-like in people’s lives and challenges what is not Christ-like in society particularly the structures which make up society. Pope Francis speaks of pastors having the smell of the sheep and the Church as a field hospital. Issues such as discrimina[tion] ...

Plenary Council Responses Recorded at Meeting held on Saturday 15th September God is asking us in Australia at this time: To stop being afraid. To follow his teachings: listen to the Word and be faithful to the Gospel. To be honest. To be one with God. To practise forgiveness and compassion. To find faith that is not based on God of punishment and authoritarianism. To create a Church that is structured in a way which is more accountable and receptive to the needs of the people. A Church which is reaching out to and involving young people in all aspects of faith life.

What is God asking of us in Australia at this time? In pondering this question, some words of Jean Vanier, the founder of L’Arche\*, came to mind. He identifies three important things for the organisation’s future: “At L’Arche we will avoid this movement from insecurity to security and then to decadence only if we remain alert to three things: fidelity to the poor who cry and disturb, the quality of community life, and trust in Providence”. I believe attention to these three things—the cry of the poor, the quality of our Church community and trust in Divine Providence apply equally well to the Church in Australia, in order for it to thrive and fulfil its mission. To address these three things, we are being asked to demonstrate repentance, reform/renewal, deep listening, wise prayerful discernment and courageous action. 1. The Cry of the poor. At this time, Pope Francis has spoken movingly about mother earth being the poorest of the poor. There are many obvious ways in which our Church can address this call—(embracing renewable energy sources, supporting conservation, reducing waste, and living simply etc.). The Church has responded to the cry of the poor in many wonderful ways but I feel we could do much more in solidarity with all those people who are in any way marginalised or experiencing deprivation. I think the Church in Australia is being asked to seek simplicity and to divest itself of those things that stand in contradiction to our solidarity with the poor. As an example, Catholic clubs in NSW are seen to support gambling which causes enormous harm to vulnerable people. We are being asked to ensure that before all else the operations and business of the Church are conducted with Christian values and not just with the practices and mindset of the corporate world (e.g. Church leaders and managers following the advice of lawyers not to apologise for misdeeds) Church dioceses could engage in a specific project to help the poor during this time of renewal, as Pope Francis suggested in the Year of Mercy. 2. Community Life. This is an area that requires profound reform and renewal. At the level of leadership, we need to have people who are servant leaders—humble people who encourage and empower others to exercise their gifts within the Church for the good of all. Therefore, we are being asked to: • Commit to the implementation of the teachings of Vatican II. • Involve women in decision-making at every level of Church life. • Dismantle every vestige of clericalism and become a more synodal Church which is open and transparent. Where necessary, seek a revision of Canon Law. • Encourage community in the Church with the development of small Christian Communities—(“Our parishes must be capable of generating a people, that is , of offering and creating relationships where people feel that they are known, recognised, welcomed, listened to, loved—in other words, not anonymous parts of a ...

God is asking us to respond to the realities of the situation facing religion in Australia? Church is in decline and there is not the Mass following of faith as there has been in the past. Christianity is becoming increasingly marginalised. We are living in times of hostility towards religion. There is a wholesale abandonment of Church in our secular society and rejection of the idea that a spiritual life is essential for a human being. Evangelisation is almost impossible in the western world where the

world view is empirical. There is apathy and antipathy towards religion. People see the Church as having betrayed them but still believe in God. It has lost its moral authority because of this. There has been hypocrisy in the Church which means many people see it as not authentic, real or relevant to people. Their faith is above and beyond this experience of Church. Many priests do not make a connection with their parishioners and do not speak a language which engages young people in the faith life of the community. Well prepared homilies which connect real life and current issues with the gospel message are essential. Pentecostal style churches seem to be growing because they present the faith in an engaging and appealing way with music, dynamic preaching and strong messages. Do many people stay with these churches for a lifetime or does it just fill a need for a particular time in their lives? [The] Church needs to be helping people to build a relationship with God through meaningful community experiences that fully engage them in the process, not treat them as passive recipients with no rights to have say.

Recorded at Meeting held on Sunday 14th October God is asking us in Australia at this time Accountability and transparency in our Church. Governance has to be clearly honest and open in all areas of management of money, personnel and decision-making. We need a culture that empowers people to participate at all levels of Church decision-making. The model of authority in the Church should be one of servant leadership—how can the leadership and structures of the Church be based on serving the people of God rather than ruling over them. Priests need to be trained to accept the equality of the laity in all areas of Church life and to recognize the abilities that individuals have to contribute to the life of the parish through real decision-making bodies such as Councils, Committees parishioners should not be seen as infantile, passive members of the community.

I feel he is asking us to bring revival and vibrancy to the Catholic Church. Let people feel alive when they come to Mass by encountering the Holy Spirit at praise and worship to awaken their spirit. Young people need to feel that presence of the Holy Spirit and praise and worship God in song and dance. This is why evangelical Churches appeal more and more to Catholics leaving the Church.

Show repentance for the wrongs of the Church in Australia and the world. The leadership has failed to lead, being the boss of manpower and physical assets does not come with the job of bishop. bishops should teach guide and correct the priests and Faithful citizens. The bishops could employ staff to manage assets, then concentrate on Faith. If one looks at the average parish there is a lot of over 60's, and very few school age children and even less 20 to 40-year-olds. The huge resources of the Catholic Education Institution has failed to teach the faith to the last two generations.

Surely the time has come for vestments to go the way of nuns' habits. We in the Church do love our pomp and ceremony but to people outside the Church it is esoteric and alienating. I would like to hear lay preachers presenting the homily at our weekend Masses. Very few priests have the charisma of preaching but many lay people do. I realize they would have to be accredited by the Church—but certainly not trained by the Church. Before we can evangelise to non-Christians, we need to evangelise to each other and the Sunday homily would be a good place to start—but not with the standard of preaching that we tend to hear in most parishes.

As an older Catholic, I wish I knew. Hopefully he is asking us to become a "more community" Church. I would love to see this happen before I die. Although things have changed a lot for the better over the last 50 years, I still get the feeling it is them and us. We go to Mass and hear the word but there is very little community. No wonder our young ones don't come to Mass. As humans, we want to belong. Many years ago, we had community around us but not any more for many people. So wouldn't it be great to see it in our churches?

I am afraid my contribution will not answer the question being asked. I see that things need to change—but I have no idea of what should be done. I fear that, as Catholics, we have become complacent, mainstream people, who don't want to rock the boat in standing up for gospel values—a position not aided by the Press saturation on clergy abuse. I do not understand why over 200 children take part in the annual sacramental programme and the following week, after reception, there are only nine at the three Masses in the parish. Is there some deficit in the teaching of religion in Catholic schools? Further to that—Catholic school numbers appear to be thriving but the number

of teenagers at Sunday Mass can be counted on your hands. I know that parental example is the primary teacher but as young parents appear to be staying away in droves—where do we start? I feel that this malaise within the Church is also abroad in the Community, particularly in the political arena where we desperately need compassionate and just leaders, prepared to act and do the right thing, whatever the consequences. However, we in the Church already have our hero, Jesus. Is it only in adversity that we turn to God? My only small, rather nonspecific, contribution to answering the question—is that perhaps we need to listen more intently to what Jesus has said and act on it. For example, if we really believed in the gist of 'the Good Samaritan' and other stories of similar ilk—this country would not treat refugees as we currently do. On a personal level please, please do something to stop the introduction of any more of the 'new' English translation of the Mass and readings. I cannot see how the use of outdated, archaic language enables participants at Mass (particularly the young) to understand more fully what is being stated. As I am aware of at least two people who have left the Church over this matter—they considered that the clergy, who appeared to privately agree with them, were incapable of protesting the introduction of what, in some readings, is only once removed from gobbledygook, I feel there are others who share this view. Thank you for providing this opportunity.

I think God wants us to go back to basics—to the time of the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus clearly and simply explains and answers questions on Life. The Catholic Church has become too complicated for the ordinary man and many leave the faith because they feel it is too much to comprehend—from boring Sermons to rules that make no sense.

God is asking of the Church in Australia today to accept the challenge and call to change so that it may be true to its purpose to be 'a light for the world' and 'salt for the world'. To respond to this call, God is asking the Church to leave behind structures, models of governance, styles of leadership and authority, rituals and symbols, laws and regulations and a culture that reflect a bygone and limited era in human history rather than the call of the Gospel. God is asking of us as Church to reshape and restructure itself in ways that enable it to respond to the needs of all who are part of it, as well as those of the wider Australian community.

He is saying, why is my Church failing in its appeal?

Radical transparency and radical inclusiveness and brave leadership. All of the Church's matters (except, obviously individual's personal and confidential information) should be open available for Public scrutiny. Let's be radical and lead other institutions in this. If we can't be transparent in any field of activity (e.g. commercialism confidence information), then the Church should exit that field of activity. Let's be honest in our inclusiveness—no more love the sinner, hate the sin type of talk. That's just a dishonest way of saying you're not welcome. If people are welcome to join our worship then, let's just say that: "please join us in our worship of God." We don't have to feel threatened, we won't have to change our doctrine if they join us. Let's just include them in our worship, without putting caveats and qualifiers on them joining us. Finally, brave leadership—let our leaders lead the way God wants them too. Let them be brave and unencumbered by the fear of upsetting the conservative lay and ecclesiastical hierarchy. Push through, do what God wants Catholics to do and ignore the naysayers.

"Come back Shepherd, come back to the flock. Your 100-year trial is nearly finished."

We specifically looked at the question from a Catechist perspective as the majority of us are Catechists and are part of the parish Religious Education Program in our State. These are the responses received. The primary requisite of a Catechist is a love of God and a love for children. We should be able to teach more about the consequences of evil—Satan, hell, etc. Nations/notions? (*sic*) are man-made and not referred to by God. How to encourage more parent involvement? How to transition from just bringing children to the classes primarily for the sacraments to regular Mass attendance? Source more technical help to assist with adopting teaching techniques being used in our schools i.e. media resources. More parental commitment for class attendance e.g. talk/teach children about God at home. Bring children to Mass regularly. Encourage children to put God first instead of sports. See the positive and Catechists build on that. Give thanks for the parents,

grandparents, children's sisters and brothers—their faith, their abilities. Help the children meet/encounter Jesus in the lessons we teach. If possible, more parents should be more involved in assisting their children in their faith journey. Individually—to nurture our faith to become a true disciple of Jesus. Family—to show love and care among family members so as to have Jesus in our midst. Community—to listen with a discerning heart and show acts of kindness with the aim of nurturing our faith, hope and love. To have patience and show encouragement to the children who come but are not necessarily encouraged/supported by their families. To look for ways to encourage the children's families to be more involved. Allow a few minutes for children to share 'news' (maybe one per week) very briefly on how God/Jesus is helping them. This gives them a reason to think about God/Jesus apart from the lessons and how they are touched personally in their lives—only those who wish to share.

1) We need to get back to the basic Christian communities (not the same as early Christian communities but similar). The parish has become more of a Mass centre. The community aspect needs to be re-established. We have lost the sense of community. Educate people at Mass to do the simple jobs and place a little more emphasis on the communal event. 2) Re-evangelisation of Australia by more prayer and penance. 3) Spread the word of God in your own circle by example a smile. 4) To be present on a daily basis. Every member tries to be present in the moment so they can respond to the needs of the moment. Not living in the past or future. We need people present at Mass and for neighbour. 5) Evangelisation of adults and kids. Real world challenges to empower laity to debate the Church's views and world events. 6) Revisit Vatican II.

A renewal of the Church through a return to orthodoxy. To go against the spirit of the age and live out our faith and morals with great courage rather than be shaped by the modern age. The truth of the Church is timeless and eternal, this needs to be recognised by the Clergy and laity.

I think that God is asking us to promote real Christianity in our personal, community and national life. The world is so very unspiritual and material. We have lost our way—the media and our community are promoting agendas and life styles which are against Christian and Catholic principles. Our lives are becoming increasingly self-centred and unhappy—full of distress. We need to get back to living the life that was meant for us as God's children. As Catholics we need to be an example of how to live a God centred life—putting God first. We need to stand up for our faith and be firm examples. This includes having courage to go against the tide of political correctness and current widely accepted community opinions where this contradicts our Faith and God's teachings. The things we need to fearlessly and strongly promote include: 1. The sanctity of life—abortion and euthanasia to be outlawed. 2. The sanctity of the family. Natural marriage to be promoted and gay marriage outlawed. Protect our children from influences regarding the promotion of homosexual practices. All people deserve our love but homosexuality is not part of God's plan. 3. We need to desexualize our culture—bring sexuality back into the safe area of marriage and protect our children from sexual influences such as immodest clothing and behaviour. Chastity to be promoted except for marriage. 4. Catholic organisations such as schools, churches and hospitals to become unashamedly Catholic in their teachings and practices—society is not in a good way. Catholic organisations should not conform to society but shine a light for how to follow God's teachings. Employees should be limited to practicing Catholics. The traditional Latin Mass is an important and extremely beautiful part of our Catholic Faith—it needs to be supported and promoted.

God is asking his Church to cooperate with Him in preaching the good news of Jesus Christ to the whole world. In order to do this, The Church needs to form: Mature Christians with Adult Faith: Who are formed and led to Jesus Christ by Catechists of the baptismal Catechesis of the Catholic Church in a faith community; Who learn to see their lives in the holy scriptures and how God loves us, leads, corrects and forms us through the books of History, Wisdom, Prophets, Gospels and Letters; Who are not pretentiously good but know their sinfulness and rely on Eucharist, Confession and other sacraments and the prayers of the Church and of each other to combat our sinfulness; Who, even with their weakness, humbly but joyfully preach the Gospel of Salvation through the life, teachings, Suffering, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ in whatever situation they find themselves; Who,

even with their weakness are not afraid to be Holy and live the Beatitudes of loving their enemies as Christ loves them and suffering for the gospel with faith and hope. Who are obedient to the authority of the Church and the Holy Spirit working through it to serve and be sent wherever the Church sees the need for evangelisation. God is asking the bishops of this council to trust Him and receive His Spirit of courage to let him form His Church in Australia and the world: To pray for and receive discernment to Listen to the Spirit and those who are led by the Spirit of God, especially the quiet, the poor and those who are seen as weak, ridiculous, even fanatical and foolish, especially in the eyes of current Church leaders. To be courageous in carefully monitoring and correcting errors and omissions in the lives and formation of priests so that obedient, well-formed and holy priests lead the parishes in adult faith formation and maturity through Post baptismal Catechesis of those who are baptised but don't live Christian lives. To allow and encourage parishes to form small parish-based communities of Post baptismal Christian Formation and for bishops and priests to walk in one of these communities to receive the same ongoing training in Holiness by the Word of God, through the sacraments and Liturgies and in an intimate Communion with Brothers and Sisters being formed in Jesus Christ. To recognise and use Christians with adult faith to preach the Gospel in Catholic schools. To separate Faith Formation from ordinary education and replace people without faith with Christians with adult faith help form the Curriculum and teach faith according to teach the Catechism of the Catholic Church in Catholic schools to both teachers and Students. To recognise and use adult Christians to assist bishops, priests and educators in fearlessly and joyfully opposing worldly errors of sexuality, violence, consumerism, self-centeredness, idolatry and ego with the Spirit and Gospel of Jesus Christ.

God calls us to be his holy people and to be an inclusive community of loving individuals at all levels. As families, schools, parishes and the broader Church. He calls us to be close to him through the Eucharist and an active prayer life. He asks us to befriend and work towards social justice for the marginalised and outcasts in our society and to eliminate violence in families—child, intimate partner and elder abuse. He wants satisfaction for the sinfulness of the hierarchical Church against children, adolescence and vulnerable adults. This group includes victims of domestic violence, people living with mental illness and those who are disabled in any way.

I think God is asking us to be strong and face reality, there are so many issues in contemporary society and the Church is such a large institution that hasn't been able to keep up for decades. An institution run by mostly old men, rampant corruption, different priests and bishops preaching contradicting ideologies, it's just a big disappointing mess. I think God wants us to thoroughly look at what the Church is, what we believe, to be able to unite, face the horrors that have occurred, because otherwise, no one can take the Church seriously. It needs transparency and clarity. I think many Catholics are out of touch between their religion and reality, as if they're separate lives. I think it's a matter of clarity that God wants us all to become more spiritual and individual in our relationship with them. Which requires viewing scripture as metaphorical, living as Jesus did, which means acceptance, understanding, humbleness, love for all. Cutting out the crap of the Bible that gives bigots and fools 'grounding' to marginalise and prey upon others. I think God's message is truly about love of all and for him, and I think often when people hear that, they get defensive of their God and attack, but the Church needs to lead the way, be the beacon it was intended to be.

God is inviting us to 1. be converted and 2. be united by a) rediscovering who Jesus is in our lives and b) re-establishing who He is in our Church.

In summary: • Women deacons are wanted • The right of clergy to marry has been stated clearly • Australian standards for managing parishes, RE programs etc. • Catholic schools need to get back to basics for RE e.g. Catechism needs to be taught by practicing Catholics. Teach moral values. • Listen to the young • 3rd rite of Reconciliation. We need to move forward but learn from history. We seem to have thrown the baby out with the bathwater in some instances, especially for RE classes where they no longer know their catechism or prayers.

To love one another, and come together as a community (all of Australians, not just Catholics), and also take care of the community and planet for future generations.

To be a Church of Welcome. A Church that reaches out with care and genuine love to those within parish communities and within the local community. To have parish communities that care and know about: - who is going through a period of spiritual darkness. - who is suffering as a result of old age, illness, mental illness, addiction, unemployment, financial difficulties, etc. Where is that old lady who has been at Mass every Sunday for the last twenty years and is no longer there? That being a member of a parish community is to be a member of a loving and caring family. To have a parish family that reaches out both spiritually and materially. "We will help you and we will pray with you." parish Community Outreach should be instituted as a new Ministry within the Australian Church. One Sunday a year should be dedicated as "A Day of Outreach and Welcome" and be extended to include RCIA activities to invite non-Catholics to join with us in building the Kingdom of God on Earth. "Build the Kingdom with care and love".

I have for a long time been concerned and disappointed about the many Catholics who do not practice their faith resulting in generations being lost to the faith. I see it in my own family. They for the most part send their children to Catholic schools but go no further. They do not appear to have any appreciation of the miracle that takes place at every Mass when the bread and wine is transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Also, what God commanded us to do—to keep holy the Sabbath day. We live here in this country Australia, with all the benefits and privileges provided and take it all for granted. We forget that Jesus said "without me you can do nothing" and at another time He said "to whom much is given much is expected." What do I think God wishes for the future of our great country? For people to come back to the active practice of their Catholic Faith. Our Blessed Lady in the beautiful pray said at in visitation to St. Elisabeth " The almighty has done great things for me holy is His name". Hasn't He done great things for us? Kind regards, [ - ] [ - ].

To build the Kingdom of God on Earth in Australia. Therefore, the role of the laity in society needs to be re-evaluated, given specific formation and encouragement. The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church says "the lay faithful have as their own vocation to seek the Kingdom of God by illuminating and ordering temporal affairs according to the plan of God." (188.) It is becoming critical that Catholics and Christians generally become involved in the political and social institutions of Australian society. We are seeing fundamental Christian belief being legislated out of the legal framework in this country. Same sex marriage, gender reassignment, euthanasia and abortion are recent examples. The introduction of laws in respect to these issues are accompanied by strong campaigns conducted by organisations and individuals who are atheist and anti-religion. Often, these campaigns are accompanied by moves to impose non-exemption clauses to religious institutions and bodies. History demonstrates that something made legal soon becomes acceptable and that opposition is decried as discrimination. As a result, religious belief is frowned upon and not allowed to be expressed. The existing organisations within the Church are not intended to, and are not able to, address these questions in a manner which can see effective outcomes. The bishop's Conference needs to institute and fund a Lay Apostolate to provide formation, education and training to young Australians to play a Christian role in the institutions of society that embrace politics, the media, industrial organisations and business. If we do not undertake this mission Australia will become a society void of any form of Christian teaching.

God would like more participation from the laity. The neo-catechumenate was formed by JP II to evangelize. Neo-catechumenates are laity. They do not [have] a lot of power to change within the clergy. Each parish has three groups—parish life, Christian life, and pastoral life. These three groups are overseen by a bishop. The Christian life group is for Catholics who are working. The parish life is for people at home and in the community. The Pastoral group is the clerical group. The Christian Life group and the parish life groups have little power within the Church to change things. While the Pastoral group has great power but does very little. What I think God would like is a balance of power within the Church. By giving the parish life and Christian life groups the power to democratically vote on issues that affect all the parish the balance of power would be readdressed. To this end, I propose an ongoing Plenary Council that meets whenever there is an urgent need for change. Not as it meets now—only every 80 years. Matters can be brought to the attention of the

parish by word of mouth and discussed at meetings and a vote for change made and submitted in a democratic way to a Council of Democratic Plenary Change consisting of 100% practicing Catholic laity. The submission would go before the Synod of bishops for change and then to the Archbishop who would submit it to the College of Cardinals and then the Pope for approval.

There is currently a crisis of faith in the Church. Crisis of faith means that its hard to see the signs of faith—love and unity—in the world today and in the day to day life of ordinary men and women. Jesus says love one another as I have loved you—it's through this type of love that Jesus continues to be present in the world and those inside and outside of the Church can continue to have the possibility to meet Jesus and his transforming love. We see the churches becoming more and more empty, people have left and some are in the process of leaving. Those left in the Church struggle in front of this saddening loss of brothers and sisters and find it hard to continue under the attack of the secularised world especially in front of the scandal of the events the royal commission has surfaced. We find ourselves feeling more isolated without the necessary tools, inspirational leadership or even personal courage to respond. We remember St John Paul the Second when some of us saw him speak at a World Youth day many years ago, he said: "do not be afraid to be holy", This is the crucial aspect: Christians are called to be holy. This call we believe has been diluted and broken down. It's not enough to do social work, it's not sufficient to build and run more Catholic schools or health facilities. These things are all good but what is it that can make us holy? Holiness—loving like Jesus loved—is what will rebuild the Church of Australia. People inside and outside of the Church crave for this type of love. This type of love can rebuild communion—and the world longs for unity. A Church full of Christians who are a sign of the living Jesus. This call to be holy needs to be re-invigorated. We must recall Christians and the Church to Holiness. The Church means nothing to the far away, if anything it has now become associated with corruption, sexual abuse and power. But the Church we know is a Church of motherly love that has loved us at our most vulnerable and in the moment of weakness has brought us to meet Jesus. How do we reveal THIS Church to those far away? In every parish, we need an itinerary of faith where those who have received baptism can develop and grow their adult faith. A community where one can discover who they are, that God loves them as they are and that through this love true communion can develop. Out of this experience, the zeal for evangelisation can be nourished and the far away reached. There is an urgency to make Christ present again in Australia.

God has not changed the charge we have been given, we are called to worship him, to love others as He loves us and to proclaim that He is the Way. We can only achieve what we have been set if we are relevant and demonstrate a true willingness to challenge the structures which entice all of us into selfish self-satisfied materialism. God is, I believe, using the Spirit to move us to relevance and to renew our moral authority. In terms of relevance, it is time, in fact past time, to acknowledge that women are the equal of men. We cannot live in country where we all, including clerics, accept women in positions such as Prime Minister, Premier, heads of Catholic education organisations, heads of Catholic healthcare organisations, as judges, professors and theologians and yet deny them access to the priesthood. It is impossible not to feel that God is wounded by not acknowledging that God is as female as God is male. And that women can serve him in all the ways that men do. In terms of loving others as He loves us, the Church in Australia has a unique challenge and opportunity. This is to be a leader in walking alongside the Indigenous people this nation. I believe that much has already been accomplished in this area by the bishops, numerous congregations and the Catholic welfare organisations that operate in Australia. However, the opportunity is constantly there to be more vocal and to be willing to be slapped across the face by politicians, the media and (quite reasonably given the child abuse scandal) a cynical public. I believe that God is asking for a brave Church that is willing to vocally support the treaty that Indigenous Australians have drafted, that continues to support land rights principles and which demands closing the gap between non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians in areas such as health and education. I believe that God is unchanging in presenting a love that we do not understand, to send His Son to give us life at the expense of his Son's own life is a very difficult thing to understand. But we can understand that this

is a call to embrace the difficult, to stand with the disenfranchised and all the discomfort that that entails. By standing with women (and not above them) and by walking with the Indigenous people of Australia (and not trying to patronisingly direct them in the 'right' direction), we, as Church will be doing what God asks of us at this time. I also believe that God is asking for the Church to continue to be a counterpoint to the noisy, constantly busy society that we are in. To let people know that reflection, meditation and prayer are for healing and for gaining understanding. This is a gift or grace that the Church must continue to offer, both to those who attend Sunday Mass and those who can reach through music, art and the various forms of media that technology has given us.

We think God is asking us to bring the Church to those who are unable to attend Mass due to physical limitations, such as a disability or elderly. We think God is asking us to reach out more to the elderly, the depressed, the lonely, by involving more youth in that action. We think God is asking us to show more love and tolerance to other people with different religions and beliefs.

To go to the roots of our faith. The apostles received the gift of the spirit of Jesus Christ risen from the dead. This changed them from men of fear, who were confused by the events of Jesus' passion, crucifixion and death, to become living witnesses of the fact/good news that Jesus was truly the Messiah that they'd be waiting for. They witnessed/evangelised that death had been overcome, that Christ had risen from the dead, that the Father out of love for us had sent His son to manifest His love for us all as we are. This witnessing of the apostles changed the life of those listening to their preaching, Faith comes from listening to this good news, this faithful and merciful love of God for us sinners. I think that God is asking us to make this good news known through the preaching, to be witnesses of His mercy and love in front of our concrete situation and sins. God sent His son to die for us, to show to us that in front of our weaknesses/poverty/sins that He has taken it all on himself. Our sins are nailed on the cross, and His resurrection frees us from them and gives us the possibility to live and experience eternal with him, beginning today. There is a real need for a post baptismal catechesis in the Church. Most of us have received the sacraments and then our faith formation stops, we are supposed to be adult in faith. But the fact is that it is essential/imperative that we all have faith formation, to be nurtured, to grow in adult faith. To live in the world is not easy, as the devil tests us in many ways, it is a constant battle. How easy it is to live a divorce between religion and life? To fulfil our duty of going to Mass every Sunday but then forget about God for the rest of the week. I think it very important to have small communities walking/journeying in faith together to discover the immense treasure of our baptism, which isn't just a certificate in our filing cabinet but a way of growing in faith. The word of God is so important not to study but to enlighten our history and our concrete reality. To remind us constantly of the love of God for us and to listen to His voice, to give us discernment to all events of our lives. The sacraments too need to be treasured, especially the sacrament of reconciliation, the importance of entering in to the beautiful gift where in front of our sins the Church comes through the presbyter in the name of Christ to give to us forgiveness of our sins and through this gift a possibility to stand up again. And in turn, offer this love and forgiveness that has been received also to those around us. "Love one another as I have loved you". Transmission of faith to children is only possible if we as adults grow in faith first. Even in a Catholic high school, the students are not encouraged to live their faith once they leave school. It's important that teachers also have faith formation. Seminarians need also a faith formation, not just an intellectual formation.

God is still wanting us to go out and make disciples. In other words, Conversion. In order to do this, we need to deepen our personal relationship with Jesus. We need to understand our faith clearly. We can also use apologetics. We need to be committed and also charitable—love with action (time and financial). We especially need to nurture our youth as they are the Church of tomorrow—through Sunday school programs and youth groups.

To include lay people more in all aspects of the Church. I have found that many priests having difficulty giving a homily whether it is due to English being a second language or speaking is not something they are comfortable with. We all have talents and I think those with a talent for delivering a homily (it may be a religious sister or a member of the congregation) needs to be given

the opportunity to do this—at least some of the time. I'd like to see more communication after Mass whether it be a talk and answer session over a cup of tea—find out about who needs prayer, help with things in their life. I know they do this in some other churches.

God is asking us to act justly, honestly and with integrity in all things: For this to take place in the Catholic Church, moving forward we must look at all areas where we have failed. On this day when Cardinal George Pell has been found guilty and as I reflect on all the innocent victims of sexual abuse down through the years, I now understand better why there was so much silence and cover up. The abuse and dishonesty, injustice and lack of integrity was there from the top down. How awful. How terribly awful. May I suggest that the Church in Australia needs to look at the total structure and be bold enough to change it. There needs to be professional people with expertise in all matters of 'human resources' and the lack thereof within the Church. What would Jesus say and do about all this? It is incumbent on us, the laity to press for the changes necessary, or at the very least to work towards the implementation of changes.

I believe God is asking of us to be good, loving, honest people, and that our sole focus should be to look after, love and help one another.

To modernise our traditional values to better suit our new age society. To be more tolerant of new ideas and open to other faith traditions in our pluralist society.

I believe there should be more involvement of lay people. Training and appointing lay people to positions at all levels within the Church. Lay people to preside over certain roles within the Church i.e. baptism, funerals, etc. Women must have roles within the Church. Priesthood should be open to married and women and men ordained as deacon being able to perform certain duties within the Church. Training of priests to be changed so they are ready for the outside world. They must be trained to what happens in the outside world. Trained at Universities not at seminaries. Reconciliation to be changed to a community reconciliation. Masses to be held outside of churches, marriage ceremonies held outside of churches.

On a day when Cardinal Pell's conviction has been published and the Roman meeting on sexual abuse is fresh in our minds and after decades of scandals often hushed up, with the virtual collapse of the Order of brothers that educated me, and several priests I have known being outed as abusers, it seems obvious that God would be asking us to clean up his Church, to restore its reputation, to make it a safe place for children and the vulnerable and to act as Jesus would expect it, not as defenders of an institution more interested in itself than its divine mission. In the words of several Australian bishops, we need to accept that clericalism and a refusal to share power are at the heart of what ails the Church. Words are not enough. God is asking us to walk the talk, to show courage to face the need for deep and genuine reform, and even more important the courage to act on clericalism. Sharing power is necessary in our parishes where the parish community and the parish council do not share in real decision-making. Those still attending Church sit silent in the pews as though there is nothing wrong but in conversation there is deep misgiving about our Church and our role in it. The role of women needs to be expanded in every aspect of the Church. The priest may be needed for the sacraments although I was taught that baptism can be administered by anyone and that Marriage is self-administered with the priest as witness. Priests are often inadequate to the multiplicity of roles they play and seldom engage with the thoughts and concerns of those they serve. Training that core workforce, upskilling it, using modern technology to expand the reach of effective pastors. As one parishioner put it having KPIs would be standard in any other large organisation. The glittering pomp of the higher orders is out of touch with the destruction of belief and reputation they have wrought on the faithful. Humility about what has happened and a modicum of sackcloth and ashes are appropriate to our circumstances. No more shiny ornaments and lavish robes. Most of all there needs to be acceptance that this is a real crisis that we have brought on ourselves. We all share the blame and all need to be part of the way back. The idea that cardinals, bishops and archbishops can do this without the active involvement and participation of the laity is absurd as their cloistered control of power is what got us into this mess. There are so many levels here. In the multiple gatherings I have attended, some have focused on individual

sanctity, adherence to the gospels as being what God is asking. That is of course correct. Others focus on the parish and the need for democratisation of parish administration including finances. That is of course also correct. Others see the scandals overwhelming the Church's reputation, driving away the young, and the need for clear Christ like leadership from our leaders as core. That is also correct. We need an inclusive sharing Church.

I think God is asking that we be accountable and protect the vulnerable young and old. We must love the sinner, hate the sin.

I think priests should be allowed to marry. I think a wife and family would assist in keeping the priest on an even keel. I certainly know that my wife and children keep me right whenever I come out with anything stupid or outrageous. I think the priesthood would be attractive to a whole lot more able men who would make great priests.

I think that God wants more of us to have more faith and trust in Him. Many of us are lacking in both faith and trust in God, and as such, we turn away from him and pursue earthly pleasures almost exclusively. Most of the time, the course of this pursuit causes us to lose our love for one another as neighbours or brothers and sisters in Christ, as we selfishly look to our own needs before others. If we had a firmer faith and trust in God, we would realise such a pursuit is meaningless in the grander scheme of things, as we turn to help or seek help from our neighbours, thus allowing us to grow in love and spiritually.

The Church needs to consider female leadership or greater female involvement in the Church. In today's Church the evidence suggests that women have a much higher rate of attendance at Mass than men. They also have a very influential role in teaching about life and religion to the next generation. This, therefore, seems to present the issue of the role of women in the Church. Are there some ways in which women can have more roles in leadership? How can the voices of women be heard in Councils and Synods when so many decisions that are made influence this important group in society and women are not represented in this forum? The idea of allowing women to become priests needs to be re-visited by the Plenary Council as there are many in society who find the exclusion of women to be old fashioned and discriminatory. However, if women cannot become priests then other ways must be found where their 'voices' are heard and also followed. So many of the teachings and practices of the Church have a direct impact upon women, causing resentment among some because they do not feel that the female perspective is considered. There is also the problem where many priests do not work with women in equal roles and therefore, they do not hear, or understand, the views of women in the day-to-day issues that crop up. Having more women in administrative and pastoral roles would give our priests a deeper appreciation about alternative gender viewpoints. Women should be included within the groups that make decisions for the Church. For example, within Australia, women should be encouraged to participate in meetings with the hierarchy as valued contributors in discerning how the Church should respond to different issues. They need to express their views and to be able to influence the debate. In the future there should also be opportunities for women to contribute to the discussions at Synods and Councils, where their views should be valued and treated seriously. By broadening the roles available to women within the Church, it should make more people feel valued and accepted by the religious community.

There is a need for the Church to be more inclusive/show more inclusivity towards all people. The Catholic Church in Australia needs to ensure that it is inclusive and welcoming towards all individuals who wish to be part of and engage with the Catholic community. In an increasingly fragmented world, Australia stands as a stable and welcoming land for those searching for a new start. Historically, the Catholic Church has been a community leader, offering a range of services to those minority groups (refugees, Indigenous Australians) that required assistance. The Australian community remains divided on the topic of providing asylum to those fleeing persecution in their homeland, with many community members happy to turn a blind eye to the plight of their fellow men. It is up to the Church to challenge the status quo by advocating for these minority groups being

provided sanctuary in Australia, and the skills required to succeed in a foreign society. As Nano Nagle so proclaimed, it is 'not words, but deeds' that make the truest difference. Further, we must develop an understanding of different cultures and welcome those in need of refuge. For those in Australia, the rigidity of the Church's rules and regulations has left many feeling like they don't 'fit in' or have a place in the Church. One example of this is Mass. Mass should be more welcoming at the beginning, by explaining the rituals to non-Catholics and helping them to feel at home and welcome in the Church. Schools do an excellent job of this with non-Catholic students, and this should certainly be extended to adults coming into Mass for any reason. Another contentious topic is the inclusion of homosexuals in the Church. As other denominations move to further embrace of such groups (namely the Uniting church), the Catholic Church should ask itself 'how would Jesus respond to homosexuals?'. There are likely many individuals of such persuasion currently engaged with the Church, though keeping their true selves hidden. Is an inclusive and empathetic institution more likely to be focused on the individual's good work or personal life? This relates to the current debate around religious organisations and exemptions to anti-discrimination laws. It must be asked, 'do current Church positions around these issues foster further community rejection of the Church as an inclusive body?'. As the Church continues to move forward and seek guidance as to its position on certain issues, central to its reflection should be that many community members have expectations that: The Church be a place that is welcoming to all who seek it, that it be accepting of the differences of the individual, that it be compassionate, and that it be willing to change as society does so too. Further engagement with the wider community can only serve to better highlight the good work that the Church does throughout the Australian community.

Key Focus: The Religious Education curriculum in [ - ] is not meeting the needs of our students and needs to be reinvigorated and modernised. Whilst some staff expressed thoughts that the Religious Education of students should be happening exclusively within the classroom and as a result of a directed curriculum, others asked expressed the need for a cross-curricular fashion to operate in Catholic schools, so that other learning areas can include aspects of Religious Education in their learning programs. How can all teachers be part of the mission of the school to teach our faith tradition and not leave it up to a select few? This suggestion would provide a more organic and inclusive faith program for our students and would ensure that RE is seen to be valued by all and not a select few. Concerns were raised regarding some of the abstract concepts within religion, understanding that theology is a discipline studied at tertiary level and even difficult for some adults to consider. It is a challenge to know how to approach and engage with more abstract concepts without losing the interest of our students. How can we effectively engage our students in learning about religious concepts when this is something, they find difficult? If this is the mandated expectation of RE teachers in Catholic schools, there needs to be adequate and ongoing teacher formation, as many teachers don't feel confident. More active networking amongst school and other organizations such as not for profit groups and charities can assist schools to evolve their school programs to be more effective and help students see relevance in the subject. Classroom research or pilot programs organized by schools and/or through the Catholic Education Office can provide evidence for effective and innovative strategies to deliver the curriculum. The Religious Education curriculum sits within history and students can sometimes lose sight of the historical context of the events and people they are studying, seeing this as residing within a vacuum. It is important to present historical information within its wider context so that students can make vital links between religion and society. The focus on this interplay between society and religion is a focal point in upper school and remains of some importance. There is some distinction in the classroom between curriculum as a learned set of information and faith as a lived experience. While schools focus on the curriculum, there can be a gap for the students in terms of understanding "what is all this for?" How can we provide experiences of faith in action at the school level, especially when curriculum requirements take up most of our time? It is important to acknowledge that the experience of faith should be a key priority for Catholic Education. In our world, our curriculum needs to be monitored

and edited to provide an experience of inclusivity for all students. This should not be lip service, but an integrated approach.

The Mass needs to change to be more appealing to young people if they are to attend church/expected to attend church. It is vital that young people attend Mass as they are the future of the Church. The challenge is to give them an experience of Mass which serves their needs in the here and now. It is not feasible to change “everything” about the Mass, however, some changes specifically for the youth might see a small revolution along the lines of Vatican II. It might be possible to offer traditional Masses followed by more vibrant Masses at a more convenient time. The use of non-traditional music and technology would also assist. Priests need to make the homily relevant to young people and use modern examples from life to connect to the Church’s tradition and beliefs. Allowing girls to play a more active part will also allow a sense of inclusion. By improving their experience of Mass, priests are able to present a positive, relevant and evolving Church life to young people. Talking openly about negative feelings about life generally, social trends or aspects of the Church will allow for open and honest conversation which will allow young people to understand the values of the Church and their relevance to life. Allow opportunities to gather together as a sub-group of the Church community will give young people a voice and sense of place and value. All of the above mentioned, changes to the Mass will assist in engaging a new generation to be a part of the modern Church as they see a place has been made for them. Another challenge for young people who do not drive yet is how to attend Mass if their parent/s do not. The use of social media can help to network young people and provide some transport options.

Secular society in general and families, in particular, have become disengaged with the Church. There is a need to reconnect the Church with the wider world. The disconnect that currently exists between the Catholic Church and secular society is an issue for the Church because the Church’s saving message is failing to reach the people. It is an issue for families who have children in Catholic schools because they are unsure as to how to relate to the Church. In many cases, the Catholic dimension of their children’s schooling is of secondary importance, with families happy to be part of the broader caring ethos of the Church without becoming full participants. The wider community do not see that there is a problem at all; people simply see the Church as no longer important in their lives. There is an increasing need for crisis assistance to various members of the community, both in the area of the basic necessities of life and in mental health. This will help to counteract the very negative image that currently abounds following the sexual abuse crisis. There might also be a means of changing aspects of the liturgy so that it is more attractive to modern culture. Evangelical groups such as Hillsong seem to attract young people to their services. Perhaps the Catholic Church can use aspects of their model. The more explicit involvement of Indigenous themes might also be helpful. The wider use of playgroups and social events in parishes might be a way of making the Church more appealing to families. The overall aim must be to support young couples and families in the passing on of the faith. The current drift from the Church will continue if there is no change. Parish numbers will decline further and schools will be populated by students (and staff) who are non-practising if Catholic at all.

The Church needs to show more empathy. The Catholic Church in Australia must focus on showing more empathy in its dealings with the wider Australian community. As an institution modelled on the teachings of Jesus Christ, it is imperative that the Catholic Church focus on this area in order to encourage people to return and engage with the Church. Current community standards, both religious and secular, favour the inclusion of groups that, historically, may have been ostracized by the Catholic Church due to widely held beliefs. As time has progressed, these beliefs have changed, and the Catholic Church must ensure that it is a welcoming institution that shows empathy to those that need it, and that it is inclusive of all those who wish to be part of the institution. The sexual abuse scandal has had widespread implications for the Catholic Church and its reputation as a safe

and inclusive institution. As community standards around social issues evolve, so does the Church need to accept that certain changes may need to be made in order to regain the trust of the people and to make it a place of welcome. One example of a change in community standards is that of homosexuality. With the passing of the Marriage Equality legislation (through a plebiscite), a majority of Australians no longer see homosexuality in a negative light. Further to this, many practicing Catholics find it difficult to reconcile Church teachings with their personal experiences/interactions with friends and family members. It may need to be that a change of Church attitudes relating to this issue are changed, or the Church may need to work harder to effectively explain its position to such issues whilst also ensuring it remains a safe and empathetic place. Central to the faith is that God wants us to keep our compass on kindness and service to others. One possible roadblock to this could be cultural differences that relate to Church teachings. A more rigid approach to Church teachings could be found in the country of origin of certain priests, which can then lead to the disengagement of parishioners. One possible solution to this is the training of priests to be very pastoral in their dealings with the community; they must ensure they are showing the compassion of Christ in their dealings with people both within and outside of the Church. There is no doubt that the sexual abuse scandal has had serious implications for the Catholic Church in Australia. Due to this, the positive efforts of the Church, especially in relation to homelessness and refugees often go unnoticed. The Church must spend time ensuring that the wider community is made aware of the good work the Church does. This should, hopefully, have a positive change in public sentiment towards the Church, and therefore lead to families reconnecting with the Church so that God's image is reflected through strong and stable family dynamics.

To find a way for the Catholic Church to adapt and survive the changes in this era.

God is asking us to ... (Summary of staff feedback) Rebuild the trust and relevance of our Church in this contemporary society and into the future. Listen and accept differences as gifts and not as burdens. Accept and love ourselves and others. Church more relevant for the youth in the Mass and community. Go back to the roots and the traditions of the Church Accepting of all, feeling of belonging. Moving with the times, inclusive of women, improve communication. Come together to unite and reconnect, to believe again as a Church community. Explore ways to retain our youth as active members of the Church. Repair trust following the Royal Commission.

God is asking us to change our ways. God wants us to find the truth in our life through prayer and action. God wants us to speak the truth in our daily life. God's way is not the way of our world today so we need to be strong in our Faith in Jesus' message of love for all. God is asking us to live in this beautiful world and treasure its people and Nature. We must take a stand against the false Gods of the world like greed, ego, power and lust. God wants us to be examples of purity, compassion and humility while offering hope to those who do not know God or have turned away from God. If we are people of God then we should proclaim Jesus' message and live by The Ten Commandments without fear of derision from others. Today, God is asking our Church to renew its people of Faith and draw in those who are searching for God by opening our doors, listening to their sorrows, acting justly to heal the broken and praying with them to their Creator through the Holy Spirit. Men and women are born equal in the eyes of God and our Church has not treated them that way over the centuries. Women are the backbone of our parishes. They have been the backbone of Catholic Education in our homes, parishes and schools for many, many years. They outnumber men in our parishes. God wants the Church to listen to them and trust in them to show Australia the face of God.

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind"; and, 'Love your neighbour as yourself."

God is life, God is love. God is teaching us unity and strength to love ourselves and love others. God wants us to accept and respect each other.

He is asking us to try not to be materialistic and to help others that are less fortunate than us. He asks us to be more equal for both females and males within the Church. He asks us to bridge the gap between the privileged and less privileged and to care for others, and focus less on ourselves.

<p>To create a balanced society between the less fortunate and the upper class in society. People need to acknowledge the colossal difference that lies within our society today. This can be done by the spreading of awareness through social media and other platforms like the news. The lack of knowledge on this subject has not been beneficial in resolving this issue and moving towards equilibrium.</p> <p>- more charities to benefit different causes - more aware of the different social statuses so people aren't as self-absorbed in materialistic items - put lectures in place to make people more aware - fund more trips so people can experience firsthand what it is like to be those that are less fortunate than us.</p> <p>- a more love for self - learn how to be more resilient - accept others; don't compare yourselves to others so you learn to accept yourself in turn - learn mechanisms to develop a healthy mentality - learn more about the changing climate of our society; break stigma on mental health.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be good Samaritans, ensuring that all people are given dignity in all aspects of life. God also calls us to mend the inequalities in society, by being good charitable people</p>
<p>Follow Laudato Si', to be stewards of the Earth.</p>
<p>God is asking us to learn to care for ourselves; we are the most important people. To love ourselves and our body's temple, to move away from selfishness and towards selflessness. To value others over ourselves.</p>
<p>I believe God is asking Australia to recognise first and foremost that there is a GOD who is real and that we must obey His laws and commandments.</p>
<p>We believe that the spirit is asking us to rejuvenate our Church with more participation and adoration to the Holy Eucharist, more passionate evangelization. Our priests to show more passion towards Mass and not treat pastoral duties, as a job. Priest to be more engaged with his parishioners, strengthening their spiritual state. Encourage young people towards their faith journey. Build opportunities for young people to know more about their faith. Have various events organised at Church to build relationship between parishioners and their priest. As per mentioned, these opportunities of spiritual growth is impossible in our parish due to the long standing of our parish priest, who has become complacent with his pastoral duties, no reverence at Mass, The planned giving offering have dwindled to an all-time low, signs of a lot of our parishioners have left. There are a lot of young people within our suburb who have come to church at one time and now don't show up. This church needs a new priest, new blood to get the church vibrant again. There are a lot of opportunities for spiritual growth within the community. But this is being hindered with the current priest and his current ways. The priest is well aware of these issues, but tends to ignore them, as the current parishioners are an old-age population. This parish is dying slowly due to the neglect of the parish priest not wanting to change his old ways. It is the parishioners who are suffering, who want to come to church and the existing parishioners try very hard to remain, as the Masses are not performed with reverence and meaning. The displays during these Masses are shown as an event, rather than Mass. We hope the Holy Spirits moves the Plenary council members and puts some time towards our concerns and comes up with a solution for the benefit of our church and parishioners. Thanks and God Bless.</p>
<p>Don't take life for granted. Respect others and treat them fairly. Accept everyone regardless of their religious background, sexuality or race. Reduce violence. Help others in need, have empathy and be generous. Take more care of the environment. Reduce plastic in the ocean. Recycle more. Save endangered animal species. Stop focusing on social media. Stop animal abuse. Stop sexism and racism. To be kind to people even if you don't like them. Never let anything get to you. To do well in the future. To be inclusive and share. To make sure everyone feels safe. To look after wildlife.</p>
<p>Australia has been an ideal place to live and it has proved to be a place where many people in the world chose to migrate. Being a migrant myself, I saw many drastic changes in the way of living and</p>

faith of the Christians, particularly Catholics in Australia. Acknowledging the diversity of the population from different culture and background here in Australia, it calls for a unity and reformation in the faith and belonging of each person who are Christian not only by the name but also the faith. The culture of same sex marriage, living together, discrimination, abortion are some of the issues which I am worried about for the better future of my kids who grow up here. I do not wish to condemn those who chose the path in different views but if we stay together as a strong Catholic community in which we educate and nurture our kids in the right path, there's lot of changes can be done in the future. We must be able to tell our kids, why we are and why we should be different than others. We trust in God's words and we practice them in our daily routines. There are many Catholic schools which are set up here to nurture and educate the kids alongside the teaching of God, but again this approach might not be an option for those who could not afford to pay for the private schools. I would love to see the religious education being offered in each school and probably it's impossible to have it as compulsory subject but at least it can be an optional subject to be taught in schools. The future of kids lies on our hands and any efforts in nurturing them in God's path will definitely help to build up a stronger Christian community in future. Religious education should be reached by all children and not only those who can afford it. Besides that, the priests in the community shall play a bigger role too by engaging themselves deeper in the community needs such as counselling and good listener or mentor to the community needs. This will definitely build up the trust and people know the direction of their path in accordance to the God's path and faith.

The majority of people in this group voiced a desire for women to have a more active role in the Church at higher levels. They recommended the ordination of women deacons, possibly women priests (but there was some dissent on women priest, but not on the diaconate). There was also a call to married priests especially those ordained priests who left the Church to be able to return to their ministry. There was also a desire for those priests from other language backgrounds to receive assistance in being understood by their parishioners, possible with delegating their homilies to others who have a better grasp of the English language, either lay speakers, ministers from other denominations or deacons in order to have great leadership. The formation of seminarians was a concern and the need to relook at their training especially in understanding this is a vocation not a job. The selection of seminarians to move forward to ordination needs to be discerned not just ordaining all of them to increase the numbers of priests even if the seminarian is not suited to being a priest. There was a suggestion for a second order of priests who are married. They certainly voiced a desire for priests to be more welcoming, visiting parishioners and approachable, to be pastoral rather than putting up barriers. The need to rebuild the Church's reputation was also high on the list of this group. The movement of youth away from the Church was a concern, together with a request to increase the age for the sacrament of Confirmation to 15 or 16, certainly move it to high school. A higher awareness of the needs of the community, loneliness and the disenfranchised is asked for. Including more availability to the sacraments for the divorced and remarried. They want the Church to be more welcoming. More say by the laity in running parishes and decision-making was also high on their agenda. There is a belief that priests have too much power in decision-making in parishes and the Archdiocese and exclude the parishioners when making those decisions. The words of the liturgy disturb some people in the group who wanted some words changed to modern simple terms e.g. Consubstantiation, etc.

Female priests. No celibacy. Confession not to be confidential if a crime is confessed. Mass needs to be modern and be relevant to children/teenagers and young adults' want and need. Inclusivity and acceptance e.g. gender diverse, same-sex marriage, Appropriate sex education discussion of sexual preferences and contraception. Teachers forced to leave Catholic Education if gender diverse.

We need more permanent deacons including women. They can run the parishes so priests can be more pastoral.

We Catholics need to return to our mission as we strive to achieve—"One Holy Catholic Apostolic Church". "One" indicates Unity'. Division brings disunity. If disunity becomes a way of life, each one strives to care for oneself. Selfishness and greed take root and social justice is forgotten. We need to

strive to be ONE—to be united to those in authority as our Church is based on a hierarchal model with St Peter our first Pope and his successors thereafter—each must first be obedient to their superiors e.g. laity to priests / priests to bishops / bishops and Cardinals collectively to the Pope. If the teachings of "the Church" are violated by an individual, whether lay or religious, there needs to be provision for the anomaly to be rectified not 'sweeping the issue under the carpet'. There must be honour and respect for those in authority. Honour and respect has to be earned by living exemplary lives at all times. A priest who wears a clerical collar performs a dual function. 1. Identifies himself in the secular world for Christ. 2. As a messenger for Christ, his words, actions and behaviour have to mirror Christ. Our seminarians, prior to being accepted into our seminaries should be subjected to a thorough character investigation and previous history, with any character slurs treated with the utmost caution. Our churches would be better off with fewer priests, as most people in Australia have cars and can access a church with ease. Churches in close proximity could be amalgamated or have a priest celebrate Mass on a rotational basis and people can choose the time of Mass they wish to attend. But, we do need faithful and faith filled priests.

God is asking us, the Church in Australia, to Change! How? 1. By opening ALL the doors of Ministry to women. When the Apostles were chosen it would have simply been impossible to include women, i.e. culturally abhorrent in a patriarchal Jewish society. But now in 2019, that is no longer the case. More women than men attend all services and ministries within the Church. As in the broader society, we want equality and to be heard not only in private but also in public. To assert that women cannot be priests because all the Apostles were men is disingenuous at best, as the Blessed Mother Mary was His greatest disciple, not to mention Mary Magdalene. Laywomen require clear and equal recognition minus the present hierarchical discrimination, e.g. women can be Senior Altar Servers but not Acolytes, although performing exactly the same function. Even their present commissioning into the Ministry exemplifies the disparity, with men being provided with more extensive training than women and separately commissioned at the Cathedral by the Archbishop! To say that we need a male at the Altar because Jesus was a male denies our capacity to experience the Holy Spirit in, through and with the person celebrating the Mass, regardless of gender. The attribute of Jesus that we celebrate is not His "maleness" but His Divine humanity. The Holy Spirit transcends gender. Our present society has reached a phase of maturation, gender-wise, overtly and pragmatically (through legislation) seeking balance. Let us, as Catholics, do likewise. The Church teaches that for harmonious family life it is ideal to have both a mother and a father, to provide balance for the children. Why is it that this principle is not applied to the family of the Church? We have a father in our parish priest, but where is Mum? I suggest that this lack of female presence and input has created a horrible imbalance in the Church, perpetuating the suppression and abuse of women and the vulnerable. 2. By allowing celibacy to be an option rather than a compulsory vow; to have the option to renew vows yearly rather than making them for life. Hopefully, this could decrease the incidence of sexual abuse.

To be respectful, patient and forgiving.

I think God is asking of us to be a discerning Church, be in touch with the signs of the times and that the Clergy have a deeper understanding and ability to demonstrate the pastoral nature of their vocation within the parish community.

God is asking us to keep our faith strong and not be discouraged by all the terrible news in the media regarding our clergy.

1. The Catholic Church should come out very strongly against social media companies such as Google and Facebook for allowing criminal acts, offensive behaviour and racist comments to be distributed through their networks. The Church should fight hard to make these organisations accountable for monitoring what is distributed through their networks. Claiming "freedom of speech" is not a defence. With freedom of speech comes responsibility. There is no freedom without responsibility. 2. People are more connected technologically yet they feel more isolated. The Church should reinvigorate the vocation of nuns to re-establish the links between home and Church. Nuns could provide services such as home visitations, visiting the sick and making contact with people who may

be struggling with their faith. This contact from the religious in the parish may be enough for some people to return to Mass. The parish priest cannot fulfil this very important function as it is quite a big task on its own. This vital vocation has lost its significance and the Church is poorer for it. The Church should seek to restore this point of human contact with the parish. Years ago, it was always wonderful to see the familiar faces of the nuns in the parishes and to have a chat or to share a cup of tea with them. 3. I have also noticed that the number of people avoiding the chalice with the Blood is increasing. People have their fears whether they are valid or not. A way around this would be to use individual cups (small glasses) to administer Holy Communion. 4. I also feel that the sacrament of baptism should be part of the Mass instead of at a later time after the Mass. The Baptised are being welcomed into the parish community so this sacrament should take place in the presence of the parish community. It also gives children in the parish the opportunity to see what happens in a baptism Celebration. The other sacraments such as First Holy Communion and Confirmation take place during the Mass in the presence of the community. When Jesus was baptised it was done in the presence of a crowd of people who were the witnesses to the event. Witnessing has a very special place in both the Old and the New Testaments. Baptisms have become closed and private celebrations which are attended by invitation only. In conclusion thank you for the opportunity to make comment. It is quite fitting at this time in the history of the Church in Australia. It is a time to build again. The Plenary Council will be a new beginning, in my humble opinion.

I think God is asking us to listen to Him—being transfixed by the Good News; instead of being entranced by false reports in the media.

People are dismayed by the scandal of sexual abuse of minors and have lost faith in Church leadership. Who will fill that void? We need to move away from a patriarchal hierarchy and recognise that lay men AND women are the foundation of the Church and a way needs to be found for them to have a greater role in the Church.

To follow the teachings of Christ in our everyday life, to serve God and others, to treat all with dignity and respect.

- Catholic Church becoming more involved in all religious churches e.g. World Day of Prayer -The time has come for all religions to move toward becoming one world united Church believing in God; many have different names for God so we need to know that it is done in love and not evil. - To work towards truth, dialogue without compromising our faith and truth. - for Catholic organisations to stand boldly about being Catholic; increased outreach and inclusiveness; not watered-down faith - To grow in our faith, trust and love of God in those around us and to share this love with others by our trust in Him - Asking people to forgive, not take offence so easily - For Catholics to perform more works of charity; helping/volunteering to assist the poor (even those who don't appear distressed). Make an effort to help, not just donations. - Renewal of Pentecost (Novena to the Holy Spirit during Feast of Pentecost) - Each parish needs a personal, spiritual development centre, run by a trained counsellor to assist the priest - Personal awareness education/training with the aim of healing all wounds of abuse (emotional and sexual) in therapeutic groups work or one to one counselling. - We need better strategies and implementation of community and discipleship - Need full conversion process; intellectual work of your psychic, religious, moral, knowledge, subconscious personal experience (emotional)--> acceptance and action according to values - personal awareness therapeutic group work and Life in the Spirit Seminars - To concentrate on family life - Study, reflect, contemplate, pray the Gospel - Renewal of faith programmes - moral education of youth - Bring Reconciliation back to be more active - We need more formation of our parishioners in a Catholic parish, not merely those who attend because of obligation but live their faith out through the week - To develop Catholic education programs/workshops for formation on Catholic doctrine - Deepen our knowledge of God through sound Catholic catechesis or study individually, and in groups which will build our relationship with God and each other.

First of all, I'm an atheist so I don't believe that God is asking anything of us. However, just because I don't believe that there's a divine being telling me to be a good person doesn't mean that I'm not going to be a good person. The same goes for our country. Even though I don't believe in a God, that

<p>doesn't mean that I reject some of the political ideas that the Church supports. However, I strongly believe that the Church should not influence decisions made in terms of politics such as who is voted into parliament.</p>
<p>Laity needs to be brave, we need to be open-minded and increase the breadth of love to all peoples, - slow to political judgement open borders for asylum seekers. Significant equal female representation in Church—including priests 1. Uncover 2. Apologise 3. Compensate 4. Plan of action and vows for crimes of the Church in past. Make no one above the law (i.e. priests and criminal confessions). Family friendly liturgy. Everyone needs to be welcoming and inclusive. Listen to Him. Respect others. Slowing down to reflect on God. Display Christian values. Some Catholics no longer identify as Catholic and choose to go to other Christian churches where they feel the Holy Spirit is more present to them, and Christianity is more encompassing. The Catholic Church is failing to reach these people, in teaching about the Holy Spirit and Christ.</p>
<p>To continue working with those on the fringes of our society i.e. the Indigenous, the homeless, and substance abusers and in doing so, show the love of Christ to Australian society which at present views the Church with ridicule.</p>
<p>I think God is asking the Church in Australia to follow Jesus, just as Jesus Himself asks us to. Almost all of Jesus' stories were nature or relationship-based, never once academic theory. God's infinite love and goodness must be extended through the Church to everyone. This includes all marginalised groups, such as women, LGBTI, the divorced, those living together, which must be brought into full membership of the Church, so that they receive the sacraments and participate in decision-making. I also think that: clergy should have the choice of celibacy or marriage as each one discerns what is right for them. Decision-making at all levels must include women and be made at the lowest appropriate level within the hierarchy. Humana Vitae needs repealing.</p>
<p>God is asking us to look after the world, each other and all things.</p>
<p>To be nice and accepting of new concepts in society.</p>
<p>To try to live full lives.</p>
<p>I think God is asking to give the Church a chance and to experience Christianity.</p>
<p>To carry on Catholic faith.</p>
<p>To be in unison with the rest of the population and the world through his commandments and teachings—no discrimination of race, gender and sexual orientation.</p>
<p>We need to pray more fervently. We need courage and trust in God. We need to give good example and support our young people and look for ways to reconnect them with the Church. We need to support and encourage our priest and avoid unnecessary criticism. We need to be cheerful and proud of our Faith. We need avoid discouragement due to any crisis in the Church remembering we are the Church not just bishops and Cardinals. Love one another and show openness and honesty in all aspects of life.</p>
<p>To have/develop a greater understanding of our faith which will lead us to have greater reverence for the Eucharist and celebration of the Eucharist (see attached document).</p>
<p>I think the dignity of the human being and the basic rights is foremost of what God is asking of us in Australia. The importance of youth and their impact into our future. The Church's response to the Child Sexual Abuse within the Church is critical to the existing believers as well as to our future.</p>
<p>Are we truly looking after the earth as intended?</p>
<p>I can't think what God is asking of me to do that is different from what I already am doing. Trying to serve Him as well as we possibly can at home, with prayer, the Angelus at 6am, midday and 6pm. There is no master plan; just sincere prayer every day of your life.</p>
<p>God is asking of us to form a relationship with him.</p>
<p>I think that God is asking us to be grateful for what we have and feel privileged to live in such a country. We should try and help others less fortunate and try to save our planet we are destroying.</p>
<p>I think he is asking the people of Australia to be the best people they can be, treat others with respect and come together to help people out in tough situations. For example, offering aid after cyclones or floods, or ending social issues such as homelessness.</p>

I think God is asking us to continue teaching and following in his ways.
God is asking Australia to spread his message of love and compassion to all of those around us. Through gifts of charity and kindness God is asking all of Australia to help out those who are less fortunate and live in countries that are not like our own, help those who are in positions where they do not have access to fresh food and water sources. No matter what their background is, God wants us to help them.
I think God is asking us to be more inclusive and accepting especially when it comes to equality (no more homophobia, sexism, racism, transphobia, etc. ...) because God made us all as we are for a reason and for a purpose.
I believe God is asking us to help and accept everyone. This includes refugees, those in countries less fortunate and anyone who feels or is displaced. We should be funding more into the renewable energy so we can save our environment.
I think God is asking of us to do more for our environment—conserving the great barrier reef would be a start considering it's dying right in front of us and no one is doing ANYTHING about it. But that's just my guess.
I believe God is asking us to love one another and be respectful to each other. I believe that God is what wants from us all the time.
I believe that God is wanting us in Australia to love and forgive each other and love God himself.
In today's world, devoid of examples of integrity, caring humanity or real, lived commitment to Christian values in the face of shallow, dog eat dog superficiality the world cries out for the Church to return to Christ's values unadorned and unadulterated by the desire for power and prestige. There should be no such thing as "Hierarchy" in the Church; we are ALL of equal value. Only REAL evident LIVED faith, not rituals, traditions or vestments should be the cornerstone of our Church. Power assumed or given corrupts as is evident from the atrocities of abuse. As a Church we need to focus on Christ's message and not on maintaining the structures which betray it. Only then will God's love find its true expression.
I believe God is asking us to become more active in listening to the Spirit. To stop playing the tapes within us that criticise so many ideas, activities, people etc. To reflect on the word of God—suggest 1 Corinthians about activating the Spirit.
I feel God is asking us to be "open to the signs of the times". To listen to what will assist us to make choices that will draw us closer to Jesus and also listen to what is drawing us away from the love of God and take personal steps to make other choices. I feel God is asking us to LISTEN to his Word.
We think God is calling the Church in Australia not just to fix some problems but to a profound renewal. The call to this renewal is already written in the chapter 5 of the Lumen Gentium, and is the "universal call to holiness". "All the Christian faithful, of whatever state or rank, are called to the fullness of the Christian life and to the perfection of charity". In this critical time, when a society that is no longer Christian manifests indifference or hostility to Christianity, it is a matter of life or death for the Church to prove with facts the reason of their irreplaceable presence in the world. The Church is necessary to the world because in her there is the holiness of God, i.e. his love for all people. We have the mission to be witnesses of his love by loving him with all our heart and loving the other as Jesus loves us. This is the "perfection of charity", and this sustains all Church's activities, institutions and liturgies, so that without it everything is a fake, a tasteless salt. Is it too big a program to be realized? St John Paul II in his message at the beginning of the third millennium says something we should pay attention to: "The time has come to re-propose wholeheartedly to everyone this high standard of ordinary Christian living: the whole life of the Christian community and of Christian families must lead in this direction. It is also clear however that the paths to holiness are personal and call for a genuine "training in holiness", adapted to people's needs. This training must integrate the resources offered to everyone with both the traditional forms of individual and group assistance, as well as the more recent forms of support offered in associations and movements recognized by the Church" (Novo Millennio Ineunte, 31). The "training in holiness" is

then a necessity, a priority for all bishops, priests, catechists and all involved in the pastoral activity of the Church. The Pope says that the Church has recognised “associations and movements” ready to support this work. Shouldn’t these groups (see Focolare Movement, Opus Dei, Charismatic Renewal, Neocatechumenal Way and others) receive a more positive attention in Australia? We personally belong, with our children, to a Neocatechumenal Community. The Way has brought us back to the Church that we have abandoned in our youth. In it we found the “training in holiness” in the form of a Post baptismal Catechumenate (indicated as necessary in the article 1231 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church for all those baptised as infants). Forms of TRAINING IN HOLINESS and POST-BAPTISMAL CATECHUMENATE have already given new life to many local Churches around the world. Thus, God is not only calling to holiness his people, but he also provides ways to realize it. We pray that the Church in Australia can be open to this call, together with many others that are arriving to the responsibilities of this Plenary Council. [ - ] and [ - ], [ - ].

I think we are being asked to show compassion to those around us who are struggling with a variety of issues that are depriving them of living a full life. This includes the traditional forms of material poverty but also the lack of meaningful engagement with others and lack of genuine emotional and intellectual stimulation. Our society is producing children who have been deprived of opportunities to develop as full humans because their parents are too focused on work or on ‘screens’. Children are missing out on opportunities to move and interact because of our technological obsessions. We are being called to be countercultural in challenging materialism, the desire to attract ‘likes’ and a fear of critical thinking when the mob says otherwise. We also need to speak as advocates for demonised and marginalised people including Indigenous people, refugees, the disabled and those who are struggling with addictions. Glad wants us to avoid ‘walking on the other side’.

I think the Our Heavenly Father is asking of us to: 1. Be profoundly thankful to Him for finally letting us see this sin (Child abuse) which we have been ignoring: to our Father’s call to abandon our pretensions of goodness and triumphalism and humbly, courageously admit all our sins, at every level and function in the light of the Mercy of God. So the Church can concentrate on its primary duty—that of preaching the word of God and making Christ present in the world. 2. To admit to poor fruit from poor branches of important the Church functions. Especially the terrible loss of generations of young people from the Church due to errors and half-truths being taught in Catholic schools where curriculum does not teach Adult Faith to post-confirmation students but replaced it with religious education as an academic subject. And teachers are accredited as qualified but don’t actually have an adult faith. As children become adults, they need to be given adult faith formation by people with strong and tested faith and knowledge of Scriptures and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. 3. To discern genuine works of the Holy Spirit and for bishops and parish priests even parish council not to ignore or reject such as the Neocatechumenal Way—which so clearly manifest the Holy Spirit in the communities, priests, families in mission, catechists etc. and to listen to the enthusiastic recommendation of all popes since Blessed Paul IV to Pope Francis. 4. God is also asking the clergy who do to stop calumniating the Neocatechumenal Way because They are calumniating the Holy Spirit but to inquire directly by listening to the Catechesis themselves and relying on their own judgement.

I feel God is asking us to practise being true Christians and following the basic commandments of loving God and our neighbour. We need to be less interested in pomp and ceremony and more prepared to welcome others and to practice Christianity all the time not just in Church. I believe God is wanting us to be more inclusive and to give women a far greater role in the Church. Also I believe that it would be far healthier if celibacy was optional and priests could marry if they choose to. I feel that in order for the Catholic Church to survive the terrible abuse scandals and to keep children safe a shift from the hierarchical clericalism to a more level playing field is necessary. All those baptized are equal and yet priests often put themselves on a pedestal. With fewer vocations happening, the laity will be the ones to carry on the Christian traditions in the future and it is important that we are not infantilized. We must be treated as adults if we are to grow. I feel the Holy Spirit is asking us to

<p>take a more active role in looking after the environment and welcoming those who have no one to care for them.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to be inclusive, welcoming, loving, faithful, spiritual but most of all honest. The child sex abuse is dark and saddens and pains my heart and soul. The Church must accept responsibility and live the shame to help heal but most importantly ensure it dies. It happens again. Change has to happen. With more women in positions of leadership, the Church will have more of a balance and gentle understanding and commitment to mother, nature and heal.</p>
<p>He is asking us to be INCLUSIVE and not exclusive as is currently the case. He is asking us to be ACCEPTING of those who are in some way different to the ideas of the current MAN-MADE AND AMENDED CHURCH that we now have.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be accepting of all people. Jesus never turned away anyone from his ministry, so why are divorcees and members of the LGBTQI community still made to feel unwelcome in the Catholic Church? Many of our doctrines were formulated in the years following Jesus' ministry. These decisions (in my opinion) were made by men with an agenda. Women continue to be marginalised and excluded from some aspects of the Church, following doctrines from centuries past. The fundamental tenant of our religion is to love one another as God has loved us. God is also asking us, more than ever, to represent and support those people in the community who are powerless, in distress, in financial difficulties, or on the margins of society.</p>
<p>Love your neighbour as yourself and to care for one another. Look after nature. Create more of a sense of community. Show compassion to those in need. Protect endangered species. Reduce plastic waste. Save the Great Barrier Reef. Accept refugees. Help the homeless. To respect the owners of the land. Address inequality between men and women.</p>
<p>My suggestion relates to communication—As I am unable to paint my picture in the space provided I will attach the soft copy.</p>
<p>To be more OPEN and INCLUSIVE. ... NOT EXCLUSIVE! BE MORE ECUMENICAL. REGIONAL AREAS TO HAVE BETTER, SUPPORTIVE PRIESTLY PRESENCE ... CATHOLICISM SHOULD NOT BE EXCLUSIVELY AN URBAN RIGHT!</p>
<p>God is asking us to prepare our young people with the knowledge and passion they need to defend the Catholic faith. As a university student I am very often encountered with the difficult task of answering questions about and defending my faith, and most of the time these questions come from Christians of other denominations who are well-prepared with explanations and Biblical verses needed to confront a Catholic. I don't feel like enough in-depth knowledge and reasoning is offered to young people during Catechism or Religion classes at the Church or at a Catholic school. When young Catholics (and even older Catholics) are faced with challenging questions from others who are well practiced in the skill of demanding on-the-spot answers to topics that separate the Catholic religion from other religions and beliefs in the world, this is when the Catholic individual's faith begins to shatter and the individual starts to believe that maybe the Catholic faith is not worth defending or not even worth being part of. I have met too many young "Catholic" people who claim that they have stopped going to Church because they were forced to go to Confession as a child, even when they did not feel like they had anything to confess (and therefore told the priest sins that actually weren't even committed, just for the sake of going to Confession), or young people who have stopped going to Church because they were told that certain beliefs had to be held in order to be accepted in the Church, or those who believe that they don't benefit from being a regularly practicing Catholic. While it is imperative that Catholics maintain a sound and unified understanding of the religion and its beliefs and traditions, I believe that simply "knowing" is pointless if you don't know why or where the belief or value comes from (i.e., The Biblical verses, the Catholic doctrines, other religious historical writings etc.). The new generation of Catholics needs to be educated in such a way that it they will have the knowledge needed to defend the faith confidently and proudly. We also need to visibly discourage the "brainwashing" techniques (as other denominations will call it) that are used—such as forcing a child to go to confession when the child clearly does not understand or appreciate the true value or meaning behind it. I strongly feel that we need to re-assess the age at</p>

which children are prepared for the sacraments, as doing this preparation with much more in-depth education and reasoning at a slightly older age will enable a proper understanding and appreciation for this vital part of Catholicism. We also need to be exposed to misconceptions about the Catholic faith and learn how to debunk these. These are things that will not only help to stabilise and strengthen the Catholic mind in a world that is snatching young people away from the Church, but it will also prepare Catholics with the tools and explanations they need to evangelise and bring God's people home again.

Guidelines for Safeguarding in our parishes. When an allegation is made to the local group of guardians, they should convene to discuss the credibility of the allegation. Once the allegation appears to be credible, this information is submitted to the Diocesan Co-ordinator. The D C will attend a special meeting to assess the allegation. Once deemed credible the details shall be forwarded to the police and bishop. The bishop shall will decide how the local community and clergy against whom the allegations are made will be supported and sanctioned.

What do I think God is asking of us in Australia at this time? The same thing Jesus asked in Mk 16:15 and Mt 28:19–20. "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation" (Mk 16:15). "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you" (Mt 28:19–20). "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mk 16:16). We Catholics are taught this is The Great Commission, The Church's mission to the world.

The Annunciation Proclaims: Gabriel was sent by God to Mary and told her: "You are to conceive and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. And so the child will be holy and will be called Son of God" (Lk 1:26–32) Archbishop [ - ] In his homily at his Episcopal Ordination, in [ - ], Archbishop [ - ] gave a clarion call to: "return Christ to the Church and return the Church to Christ". The motto on [ - ] coat of Arms is Via, Veritas, Vita; The Way, The Truth and The Life (John 14:6). In choosing this motto the Archbishop wishes to indicate that Jesus stands at the very heart of our faith. It is He Whom we seek to know, to love, to serve and to proclaim. It is He Who will lead us to the Father for, as He says, "No-one can come to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

#### The Quran

Muslims believe the Quran to be the verbatim word, the unaltered and final revelation of their God, Allah. The Arabic word for God is ilah and for Goddess is ilahah. Allah is the name of the God of Islam not the word for God. Muslims believe that the Quran was orally revealed by their God, Allah to Muhammad, through the archangel Gabriel, over a period of 23 years, beginning on 22 December 609 A.D. when Muhammad was 40, and concluding in 632 A.D., the year of his death. Please read and verify the following quotes from any online Quran. The Quran correctly proclaims: Jesus is not the son of Allah. Suras 4.171 6.100 9.30 17.111 19.88–92 23.91 25.2 72.3 The Quran also correctly proclaims: Allah is not The Holy spirit. Suras 4.171 5.73 17.111 23.91 25.2 72.2 Question: Why would God send the same Archangel Gabriel to say the exact opposite of what he said 600 years before, e.g. God is not Father, Son and Holy Spirit; Jesus is not the Son of God? Answer: God did not!

Come Holy Spirit of The Great South Land. Bless and unite all your people in Australia. Give us the Grace to recognise Jesus. Give us the courage to speak boldly of Your Truth and a discerning heart to hear what You are Saying. Lead Your Church into a hope-filled future that we may give The Joy of The Gospel.

I believe that God is asking us to remain faithful to the Church in an age of difficulty and persecution. It has become more difficult in these changing times but I think we must ask the hierarchy to be less "hierarchical" in order to reach everyone. I do not mean a lessening of authority rather a less imperious way which unfortunately is often adopted by some clergy as they reach a high position. Not all of course. Traditions are great but pomposity is not. Approachability is needed and respect of

<p>course should always be paramount (from both sides). We the people being the Church have to be prepared to stand up for it and work with authorities to make it a better Church. This sometimes can involve some criticisms and they need to be given in a charitable and constructive way. In my age group we were given to understand that the priests/nuns were always right. With age we have learned that this was not always so—sometimes because of pressures—teaching loads, parish work and these factors may have impeded our desire to speak out. However reasonable adults should face these issues and act with common sense to address them. An example of this may be that in a country parish with a number of centres one section may feel a bit short-changed with not enough time being allocated by the priest. This should be a matter of discussion between priest and parishioners not a matter of dismissal. Again, as country Catholics we need to be community Catholics embracing those around us. We need to welcome newcomers into our midst realizing that together we can grow the Church. Underpinning everything is the need for prayer to achieve these goals.</p>
<p>Asking us to be more inclusive—in particular, females and married men of God.</p>
<p>To pray to come to Mass and to be gentle caring and kind. Also, to pray for our Cardinal who is in deep trouble. I do NOT think he is guilty. I am so sad at what has transpired recently. We in Australia need to stand up for our Catholic Faith and encourage all our family and friends to do the same.</p>
<p>To be true to his teachings and keep the faith going no matter what occurs within our country, trying to destroy the Catholic faith.</p>
<p>The need for each of us to have an active interior life and personal relationship with God in the midst of our daily life. For us to nurture our spiritual life, where we receive guidance and support in seeking God in everything we do. A life of prayer and practicing living in the presence of God, in the midst of day-to-day challenges, distractions from media and modern technologies, and 'doctrinal' attacks from unbelievers and people of different faiths. To maintain a trusting, supportive and conducive community in which we could worship and grow together in faith. To instruct and engage with our young children and youth experience the traditions and the teachings of our Church, in a way that is relevant, effective, interesting and up-to-date with our modern life and the life of young people. To have a life where we are actively contributing in the life of the Church and exercising our Christian/Catholic ethics in the community at large.</p>
<p>Be Truthful—which means see things as they really are, say what you really mean, do only what you mean to do, be yourself, etc.</p>
<p>To return to the orthodox Catholic faith and teaching of many centuries.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be realistic and to ensure the Catholic Church survives as a caring and loving religion. God is asking us to believe and that the current leaders have wandered from the true faith and His is directing us to ensure they change their thinking.</p>
<p>That God is part of the youth mental health solution (even though our institutions have disillusioned them). That women/men with families, despite the challenges, can be priests and in fact help restore faith in our Church. That homosexuals are God's children and should not be second class citizens in our Church. That the Church has a duty to get this right and become a moral compass for people. I feel that my children have been let down and are mourning for direction. (Why is it ok for me to talk about yoga but you can't mention prayer in the public sector? Muslims can have a prayer space, we can have a wellness room at school, but a chapel in a public building is not seen as ok). That young people need to realise and [be] proud of the Christian values our Western philosophy is built on.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love one another as God has loved you.</li> <li>• Share the love</li> <li>• Love our enemies</li> <li>• Be part of at least 1 parish</li> <li>• Try to follow the 10 commandments</li> <li>• To get more people to come to Mass regularly</li> <li>• To get young people more engage</li> <li>• I think God is asking us to be contributing to the parish and to do as much as we can do</li> <li>• Keep the Holy Spirit alive within the parish and outside it</li> <li>• Living as Jesus taught and how God want us to</li> <li>• Listen!</li> <li>• Respond to the perception the Church is out of date</li> <li>• Extend love to the marginalised and especially those who feel abandoned, especially the LGBTQI community</li> <li>• Make a chance for a better future</li> <li>• Involve more people (youth) in a local parish</li> <li>• Just to treat people right and 'treat your neighbour' as you would like to be treated</li> <li>• Be accepting of all</li> </ul>

<p>people especially people of other or differing religions • Be in the parish • Follow the 10 commandments.</p>
<p>Jesus came with a very simple message—To love God and all living things. We have proceeded over all these years to go the full circle back to heavy hierarchical dominance, robes, strict rules, 'wordy' prayers, concentrating on sin and punishment, building up huge stores of financial wealth. This is how Jesus found his Church in his day and gave us a very clear message, so we have not listened. God just wants us to love each other and follow Jesus' way which was quite simple.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to consider major reforms to His Church so that the sexual abuse evil can never happen again, that the Church will one day regain its moral credibility, and the Good News of the Gospel can again be spread to all people.</p>
<p>Inclusivity. We are ALL called. In terms of outreach—Jesus did not require people to 'fit a mould'—he went out to them. The official voice of the Church must call out boldly to the people who currently feel marginalised, and be willing to dispel misconceptions among its members. In terms of membership of the Church—all are gifted and all should be able to serve according to their gifts. There are many educated lay people with a great gift for speaking, for example, who could best deliver the homily each Sunday, rather than the parish priest. There are many women whose gifts are neglected, who are nothing but handmaids to the clergy. The cultural model which has evolved limits the Spirit working through us. The parish priest should not have to be all things to all parishioners. Meaningful and even ordained roles, such as teachers/preachers can be created to change the model and even out the balance of power.</p>
<p>God is asking us to redefine what it means to be Church, in particular to undertake a radical restructuring focussing on the relationship between clergy and laity.</p>
<p>To help our Church in its crisis.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• STOP teaching about 'sex' in Catholic schools especially in RE—religious education. It is absolutely irresponsible, negligent and disrespectful to Christian moral ethics, values and the Catholic faith. You are teaching the problem and not the solution.</li> <li>• Teach the Bible, the solution especially the New Testament in Catholic schools.</li> <li>• STOP teaching the 10 commandments as Jesus has fulfilled the 10 commandments when He died on the cross.</li> <li>• The Church to stand up for Jesus and Christianity openly, especially when Christianity is blasphemed by the media, people and other faiths.</li> <li>• Openly preach to the people not to co-habit before marriage and not to fornicate before marriage.</li> <li>• Openly preach to the people not to commit adultery and live in adulterous relationships.</li> <li>• Advise the people to read the Bible every day.</li> <li>• Start Bible study classes so people can follow God's Word.</li> <li>• Stop following traditions in the Catholic Church and be more open to the Holy Spirit.</li> <li>• Bring in more 'relevant music' like a live band with the Mass so people could worship God better.</li> </ul>
<p>We believe that God is calling us to develop churches that are open, welcoming communities which are inclusive and non-judgmental, in which the sacrament of baptism is fully understood, especially in relation to worship so that the laity are enabled to play their full role in worship and in building stronger faith communities. Specifically we believe God is calling us to a) Encourage priests to listen to the requests of the faithful, b) Encourage priests to listen to the Pope and keep sermons to no more than ten minutes, c) Introduce married priests and give consideration to ordaining women so our leaders understand our culture, d) Be open to lay run liturgies where suitable priests are not available, e) Not be fearful of letting go of past practices and be free to explore new ways of being Church in these challenging times, f) Use the 3rd Rite of Reconciliation widely. (especially if a diocese has a history of grave misuse of the confessional), g) Seek ways of engaging and inspiring the many good people who no longer participate in the Church in the traditional ways, h) Make training of priests, seminarians and the laity a priority, i) Seek new and appropriate ways to make the Catholic ethic relevant for young people, especially teenagers, j) Find ways to alleviate the exclusiveness of clericalism.</p>
<p>The answer is multi-faceted. In no order of their relative merit or importance, I have categorised them as follows: 1. Healing the Wounded 2. Formation of the Faithful 3. New Forums for Evangelisation and Witnessing 4. Clericalism 5. Vocation and priesthood 6. Forming the Young</p>

Church 7. Evangelisation and RCIA 8. Church Organisation Structure 9. Our Response to Cardinal Pell's Conviction Within this multi-faceted answer lies great challenges. But great challenges also come with great promises. Promises for the Church of Australia to bring God's hope and love to the far reaches of our society, especially those deserted and failed by our secular society and by our current system in the Church. I will upload a document elaborating on the nine issues.

(1) Restate the Catholic Churches main mission to bring people to Heaven and to avoid the eternal condemnation and lunacy of going to hell. Hell is substantially ignored from the pulpit. This gives a distorted view of the hereafter. Consideration needs to be given to how many other souls could be saved by confirmation of sinful consequences. (2) Proclaim Jesus by restoring public procession in the city streets. This will show that Catholics believe in the Lord. Jesus said many times "Be not afraid" "Who proclaims Me before men I will proclaim him before My father". There are many examples of public scandals by diabolical parades. (3) Restore traditional prayers and sacraments. These have worked magnificently over the ages. How many times do we need to reflect on the power of the Eucharist (Adoration—Holy Mass) the holy Rosary (the battle of Le Panto) Confession being largely ignored nowadays with hardly any mention of this sacrament by priests. Confession has been empirically proved to cure many human ailments mainly mental. (4) Encourage and promote prayer groups. Priests could show leadership in encouraging and participating where time permits with these groups. (5) Bishops teaching leadership in correcting heresy, error and promoting truth. This leadership must also clearly and audibly correct and stop confusion such as the theological impossible movements promoting women priests.

- STOP teaching about 'sex' in Catholic schools especially in RE-religious education. The solution is teaching the Word of God.
- Teach the Bible, the solution especially the New Testament in Catholic schools.
- STOP teaching the 10 commandments as Jesus has fulfilled the 10 commandments when He died on the cross.
- The Church to stand up for Jesus and Christianity openly, especially when Christianity is blasphemed by the media, people and other faiths.
- Make Catholic education affordable especially High school by lowering school fees and not make Catholic education a business. You are defeating the purpose of the Catholic Christian faith.
- Openly preach to the people not to co-habit before marriage and not to fornicate before marriage.
- Openly preach to the people not to commit adultery and live in adulterous relationships.
- People to read the Bible daily.
- Start Bible study classes.
- Stop following traditions in the Catholic Church and be more open to the Holy Spirit.
- More 'relevant music' like a live band with the Mass so people could worship God better.

In an attempt to answer the above question, I have prayed and reflected many times to the point that in my chats with fellow Catholics and lapsed family members all are saying very similar things— The 'Church' is too slow responding to issues, the Church does not listen or take notice of anything the laity, the Church is over governed by males, etc.

1. Our Catholic and Primary schools must encourage all children to attend 'Holy Mass' on Sunday. Priests to have every week on a Saturday or Sunday a 'Children's Mass' and invite parents to come along.
2. Priest and congregation bless all parents and their children with a special prayer.
3. Pray one decade of the Holy rosary on P.A. every day before school, after school. One 'Our Father', 'Hail Mary' and 'Glory be'.
4. Teach children to ask God for His mercy and forgiveness.
5. Unite in faith and pray for peace in the world.
6. Be more compassionate and loving—open to ALL God's people.
7. Sharing food with the poor.
8. Allow more women in the hierarchy of the Church, and to help with more major decision-making. Allow the clergy to marry.
9. Love one another in our small communities to show we care in a variety of ways. "We are many parts of the same body."
10. To smile at each other inside and outside the church instead of not even noticing each other for years going to the same Mass. No community.

See Submission at the end.

Please see my submission at the end. I must have input on the results of this submission as it is so important to our dwindling Church in Australia. Please keep me as an Elder of my parish and of the

<p>Catholic Church in Australia advised on the progress vital submission. The Holy Spirit will not let me rest on this. WE NEED ACTION FROM OUR "LEADERS" NOW.</p>
<p>The question was in itself a hurdle. 'How do I know what a God I don't believe in is asking of me?' was the first question my niece asked. My nephew followed up with 'the question doesn't make sense, it's too vague.' So, with a bit of unpacking and coaxing in relation to the Christian values they had been taught, and personal aspirations they have for the world, we managed to make some progress. • Responses shared: ∅ To be more open to all people's sexual orientation. God made them that way. Jesus accepted everyone. ∅ Make progress, move more quickly ∅ Admit and apologize for the bad things in the past ∅ Look after the elderly, and those who need help, the poor, homeless, etc. ∅ Look after the planet ∅ Stop the child fiddling, and lock up the perpetrators! ∅ Forgiveness—be open minded and forgive the wrongdoing of others, then hope they will do the same of you ∅ Be honest and upfront in all things ∅ Be more accepting of others, less judgmental of people's sexual orientation—surely God made them that way? ∅ Be more flexible and open to change, not so stuck in old ways ∅ To spread God's message in different ways, more modern thinking and expression ∅ To make better use of the media to promote the Christian faith in a positive and meaningful way ∅ Deal more humanely with issues such as abortion and euthanasia ∅ Forget celibacy. Jesus didn't promote that, and it has encouraged rouge/predator priests. ∅ To live out the Gospel values and so be witnesses to the world ∅ To put right the wrongs the Church has inflicted and condoned ∅ To be open and welcoming of all people ∅ To make progress far more quickly.</p>
<p>God is asking me to connect with the God essence in myself and each other, so as to express the truth of who we are, so we can raise the love vibration of the earth and love unconditionally, as God loves us. From this love expression will flow compassion, inclusivity and no separation from one another, or God.</p>
<p>Parishioners would feel more engaged and accountable if priests could visit their parishioners in their homes on a regular basis. Perhaps priests could join a meal, celebrate a home Mass, etc.? It would make parishioners discern more, understand their community and listen more actively, if parishioners could, on a regular basis, during the Homily, tell their Faith story, or give Witness to a special Blessing, or share a Wisdom. ALL Catholic children who attend Catholic schools should be given the opportunity to receive the sacramental Graces. Too many parents are too lazy/busy/mentally unwell, and their children go without the sacraments. Having been a music tutor in Catholic schools for many years, it is very sad that all children would rather have their music lessons during Religion, as Religion lessons are 'so boring'. When I recently started one day a week in a Baptist school, it was a wonderful surprise to hear Baptist children saying they cannot possibly leave Religion classes, as those are the most fun and important lessons! Perhaps the entire Catholic Religion curriculum, pedagogy and delivery could be 'revamped'? It is unfortunately, a sad reality that children need to be entertained in order to be engaged these days. Perhaps each Catholic diocese could have its own Sports teams and form leagues. It would create tremendous 'team spirit' and give everyone an opportunity to get together outside of Mass hours.</p>
<p>Although I did not attend a listening and dialogue session, I did read the Record magazine to understand the objectives of this council. In my humble opinion and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, I think we as "followers of Christ" are asked to be listening, inclusive and respectful of others in these times. By this, I do not mean formation of another institutional group at parish level but more like a "Catholic street meet" periodically with input from the "Church animators".</p>
<p>More regular Plenary Councils, every 5 years. Have Mass in different space: park, garden, home, and beach. Skype Masses for people in nursing homes (live streaming). Young people included in Mass. Venue change will entice them to come. Celibacy not to be enforced but a priestly option so he can have a family. Women to be involved in all aspects of the Church, including celebrating of sacraments, especially nuns being able to do this. Learn the lessons of the Bishop William Morris' sacking. Fewer Catholic Boarding schools for Catholic Country Children is a real concern as well as the lowering of the quality of the care they are getting from these schools. Rite One of Confession needs to be only for people with serious sins. Rite Three needs to be returned. (The matter of</p>

Penance not resolved). A twelve-year-old boy said that if he became a priest, he would want two families, his own and his parish. Men and women need to be treated equally. A woman should be able to be a Pope. Church needs to become transparent. A woman who can't receive Communion because she is divorced and remarried outside the Church feels because of Pell and Mantel's book. Feels like a refugee and ostracised in the Church. Hungering for the Eucharist. There has been power abuse through clericalism in the Church. Church needs to leave judgement to Jesus. There needs to be women priests. We need a Church that's more open and friendly. Music needs to be part of liturgy to attract children. Lay people want adult faith education to grow more in their understanding of the faith. Each bishop needs to tell all priests in their diocese what their homily needs to be about: One consistent message. How "in your face" homosexuality is in today's society is a major concern. All homilies need to be quality homilies. Eliminate kneeling in Mass, with only body positions of standing and sitting. One person said Eucharistic prayers are too long. Opposition to contraception needs to go. Homosexual people need to be respected.

1. Community. I believe God is calling us to be community in ways beyond the current formal structures of the Church ... to reach out in small (local) groups for prayer, service and fellowship. In this model, people would to be led by the spirit and follow Jesus. I do not believe this requires a priest but rather a wise and prayerful person. \* At Lent and Easter, we gather young and old to reflect on the readings of the season, to sing, pray, share insights and then eat afternoon tea together. It has been a powerful experience to be Church in this way and the comments from young people about the readings [are] often profound. \* 2. Structure. Over the last few years in my prayer time, I have seen images of stone Church structures crumbling and wooden ones burning. I feel God is calling for a new way to be Church. It is time for a new identity firmly based on Jesus and not the hierarchical model we have today. 3. Accountability. We are in great need of more accountability for Clergy in regard to the treatment of others, how they deal with issues, communicate and also represent Jesus (If we continue to have priests). Teachers have 7 standards that they are required to demonstrate competency against. Priests need this type of structure as well as being open to the feedback and flexibility to change if an area of growth is identified. There needs to be a more devolved power structure in decision-making and how a community runs. 4. Married priests. Priest should be allowed to marry as a couple can be a far better team. A marriage can help a person from being so self-centred and selfish, and opens up the reality of family life. However, the whole question of caring for a family and the costs involved would also have to be explored and solved.

To Stand up for our Faith, listen to the Holy Spirit and reaffirm, publicly without fear, the teaching of Jesus. To admit our errors but defend the defensible. For our Hierarchy to lead with courage. Isaiah 41:10 "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." Fear is one of Satan's most popular weapons that he uses against us. The most common lie that Satan uses to instil fear into us is that God is far away or absent from our presence. All too often, our Hierarchy have been mostly silent on major issues which the laity were left to ponder by themselves, like Abortion, Euthanasia, Marriage equality, and to a degree child abuse and what is to be taught in our schools. The fact is that only about 5% of high school students leaving Catholic Colleges attend Mass on Sundays. Many of them may not even attend during their high school. Why do we have Catholic schools? One would imagine it is so that Graduates leave with a strong Catholic Ethos. But do they? What is taught in the home is difficult to enforce if not complimented in our schools. Catholics today seem to lack confidence in the belief which they are meant to profess. In the media, we hear more from former priests who seem to be at odds with some of our Catholic teachings. We need a strong Hierarchy who will speak with one voice with clear messages of right and wrong which should be heard by our Catholic Politicians and those in the media and big Business. Expose the smoke of Satan wherever it is hiding. As Philip Lawler says in his book, "for decades the hierarchy has strained to cope with the deep divisions among the Catholic faithful without ever acknowledging them. Radical differences in faith have been treated as problems to be managed rather than challenges to be resolved. Thus, our hierarchy by failing to grapple with serious problems has allowed the development of two opposing camps

among the Catholic faithful and the hierarchy itself". Few younger Catholics seem to understand or believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and see no sense in Mass, we should wonder why. It is not unusual to see some people wandering up to communion with their hands in their pockets or chewing gum. Respect shown for the Mass and symbols of our religion has deteriorated over the last 30 years or more. Instil in our children once again the sense of Awe for the Triune God.

I do believe that the words of Ash Wednesday "Repent and believe in the Gospel" contain the message of what God is asking of us in Australia to-day. While our Catholic Church has been moderating her instructions so as to be relevant to the needs of the times, an impression of being 'permissive' has been created. The result has given rise to 'laxity' in our observances of our religion. Definite boundaries need to be established which clearly define the boundaries of good Catholic practice.

To pray daily. To be more 'visible' in our community e.g. saying grace at restaurants, for priests and religious to wear their collar and habits in public. For priests to give solid sermons. To talk about the tough topics such as hell and sin.

I believe that God is asking us to fully adopt the message of Jesus that He is the new covenant that supersedes all others; that we must abandon the old teachings of the Old Testament with all of its emphasis on a vindictive God, laws that Jesus himself called "men's regulations" and the obvious moral tales that are not really "word of the Lord"—Noah and Jonah for example. I believe that God is calling us to move forward with more real faith and with flexibility so that our liturgy is not just a repetitive ceremony but a genuine celebration of God's Grace. I believe we are called to take leaves out of the movements, full of life and joy, that are appealing to young people throughout the world—why not a joyous hour of songs, a little of the Word from the Gospels only, and celebration of the Eucharist, but without the monotonous, repetitive, dogmatic prayers that we no longer hear; let them be replaced by flexible words from our hearts to thank God for an unimaginable Gift.

Plenary Council Australia What do you think God is asking of us in Australia? Without prejudice and with the Love God in my heart ... I think God is asking us to obey his 10 Commandments, just as He asked the Israelites after taking them out of Egypt. Together with the prophecies of the prophets, and teachings of our Founding Fathers of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Faith, the Pope and the rulings of the Magisterium, the sacraments and our traditions I believe God has made it very clear—KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS. In fact, it worries me that our anointed shepherds are asking us 'the sheep' "what do we think God is asking of us in Australia". Am I naive in thinking that God is a Theocrat and not a democrat? The Church; I am referring to the Body of Christ here, i.e. us the people, are starving for the Truth. And there are very few shepherds telling us the truth! We have been led astray—yes over the hundreds of years—but especially since the late 1800's to now—why else is Our Mother appearing so many times trying to warn us of our impending chastisement if we don't turn to Jesus, her Son and our Saviour? Zechariah predicted it (Zechariah 13:7–9). And so now we have arrived at the chastisement, also predicted, and we are panicking. And so we should. Our Mother is trying every which way just as any good mother would to save her children from pain and damnation, but we just refuse to listen. We refused to consecrate Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary after Fatima and now the errors of Russia are killing the Church... just as Our Mother predicted. There is so much more I can say but as this is not a "bitch" session I think Your Grace understands my point. (I can say more if you wish). Yes, I have been hurt by the Church, not through sexual abuse but through neglect and falsehoods, liberal and untrue teachings of our Faith. This beautiful Faith we have been given has been watered down to reflect the heart of man not the Love and Mercy of our God and Creator. Our Church has become ugly! God is asking us to repent, to return to HIS Faith, to HIS teachings, to HIS commandments, to HIS Holy Mass and the Eucharist and JUST BE OBEDIENT! How hard can it possibly be? There are good holy priests who are working for God and not for themselves, unfortunately not many. But Our God is so good ... He forgave Peter who sinned as much as Judas did but unlike Judas he repented, and then Jesus made him Pope! How wonderful is our God! If this Plenary Council is serious about reform, it will start anew and go back to the beginning ... God gave us the 10 Commandments and 12 good holy humble and poor men, replacing

Judas with another good holy and humble man, followed by thousands more holy and humble men and woman whose example we can follow. The Devil revealed to St. John Vianney, that if there were two other holy priests like him on this earth, that Satan's Kingdom would be brought to its knees. The remainder of my answer is continued in the upload.

We need to go back to basics to teaching faith to return Australia to God. Please see my attachment for details.

God is asking us, to more than ever, trust in the Church that His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ founded, with our Pope as head of the Church and our cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests. Jesus said, 'Peter, you are Peter and on this rock, I will build my Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it.'

God is asking our Church to ensure that her priests are well formed so that they can respond to the current issues of our time, with the truth of Jesus Christ and not with false compassion.

God is asking the priests of our Church to specifically teach their flock about God's Divine presence in the Eucharist: To make adoration more available (especially for those who work) and to ensure that reverence is maintained before, during, after, in fact at all times in the God's sacred temple.

God is asking all Catholics to continue learning more about Him, so that they may become mature, faithful disciples and not have faith that is still based on what they learnt as children. Sound Adult Faith formation based on the TRUTH, (not watered down and sold as compassion) as Jesus Christ taught it, is paramount to our Church.

God is asking us to trust in Him and Him alone and not to turn to other spiritualities such as mindfulness, reiki, yoga and any other such practises. God is asking us to protect our children in our Catholic schools where these practises are being promoted under the umbrella of wellbeing. Only Jesus Christ can give us true peace. "Peace I give you, my peace I give you, a peace that the world cannot give".

- cheaper Catholic education - as a practicing Catholic, I am struggling to afford Catholic Education for my children - increase age at which children make confirmation (approx 13/14yrs) - parish based programmes for sacraments so all children in the community can mix and meet and learn together, fostering greater community and engaging youth in the parish. meet approx. 1 meeting per month until sacrament made - more roles for women in hierarchy and service - more inclusivity for homosexuals, divorcees, - stronger programmes to reach out to the youth - transparency when dealing with accusations made against Church people, accused must be stepped down from all roles and responsibilities until completion of investigations.

To know love and serve Him, Keep His Commandments, Pray for all and our country.

1. Throw open the windows and doors of the Church and do not be afraid. Listen to what is being said by most Australian's "you are largely irrelevant to me". 2. Use the current child abuse tragedy as THE opportunity to reform the Australian Church and push to the Vatican for reforms in Canon Law. The deeper problem to the tragedy is that the Catholic Church has become overly focused on centralised power. Inherent in this is a reliance on Cannon Law and secrecy. This is not tenable or credible in a modern, Western democracy. 3. Reform the Catholic priesthood. Single, celibate, male priests and an overbearing, controlling hierarchy are stifling the Church. We are becoming irrelevant because we are not following Jesus' footprints' and priests are not providing the spiritual leadership that is their mission. Priests should have option of being married, and deacons should have a greater role. 4. Admit that many lay people have not been treated fairly or justly in the past by clergy. Child abuse has been but one way in which the clergy have misused their power and status. Priests and all Church professionals (yes, priests should be classed as professionals) must be held accountable to professional standards. A transparent process must be put in place to give priests the guidance to change poor behaviour, or ultimately find another vocation. Priests must be properly trained or

<p>supported. 5. Archbishops and their dioceses should have an open, transparent dialogue process on a regular basis (e.g. every five years), for all (including laity) to celebrate positives and challenge where improvement is required. All contributions must be made publicly available, so that voices are heard and responses are seen and assessed. The laity must be given a fair voice. 6. Parish Councils must be made mandatory and parish priests and community must be given the scope and empowerment to work together. Training and support is needed. 7. The Church needs to place an even greater emphasis on the good works that we are involved in. We must focus even more on helping the poor, marginalised and vulnerable. These include those who are physically disabled, on the streets, materially poor, or in any way marginalised. 8. God is asking us to focus less on ourselves, and more on implementing the teachings of Jesus.</p>
<p>1. Parish engagement with the community 2. Leadership's program for damage control 3. Respect and reverence for the Church 4. Reintroduce St. Michael the Archangel's prayer at Mass 5. Reintroduce Catholic Education for our future generation 6. Church to be equipped to address current issues in real time 7. Protecting the right of Catholic upbringing for children in mixed marriages 8. Aggressively promote religious vocations at Catholic schools 9. Rededicate the Church to the Blessed Virgin Mary 10. Take in the lead in Community Issues 11. Program to bring back lapsed Catholics 12. Priest should be more eloquent in their delivery of their sermons 13. Parish should be more welcoming to ignite joy and passion in our parish.</p>
<p>Reformation, including: humility; prayer in our daily lives; compassion and mercy; courage to speak up against injustice, e.g., refugees, Aboriginal Australians; respect the faith of other Christian denominations; participate in adult faith education and formation all through our lives; be inclusive and not judgemental, e.g., LGBTI, divorced persons; reach out and listen to the needs and wisdom of people around us; involve lay people much more in decision-making; dismantle the culture of clericalism; review the theology of the Church on issues such as the nature of priesthood; clerical celibacy; ordination of women; contraception (except abortion); make Sunday Mass attendance voluntary; be relevant to people's lives; simplify the garments worn by priests to celebrate Mass; improve the quality of ongoing education and formation of clergy so that the quality of liturgy and preaching is improved; performance reviews of priests and bishops.</p>
<p>God is asking: 1. Families to be committed to understand and grow in their faith 2. Catholic schools to be more connected to the life of the Church 3. Married couples to support each other and stay true to their vocation 4. Build the community through gathering outside Church services 5. Build up the youth in our churches to be more engaged and feeling they belong 6. Increased importance of the Eucharist.</p>
<p>To be faithful to the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel.</p>
<p>God is asking of us as a Community of immigrants to build God's Kingdom in Australia by sharing our lived rich experiences of faith formation and to live it here boldly. To be able to infuse into the secular culture we live in, the way of life that comes naturally to many of us, as faith has been ingrained into our very being by the social values our parents transmitted to us. We believe God is asking us as a Church to stand out in being Christian witnesses, and not be passive bystanders. It is a time for great revival where we actively engage our families and communities in more visual declarations of faith—be it Eucharistic/Marian processions in main squares, or around our churches, or Tableaus at Christmas/Easter reminding ourselves of who we are and what the good Lord has done for us. A celebration, a festival as a community gratefully acknowledging the privilege we have to be children of God. It fosters community spirit and is a gentle invitation to our young people to remain rooted in the faith and tradition of the Catholic Church. It would be good to have processions in every parish for Palm Sunday besides Corpus Christi Feast, and each parish's Patron Saint's feast. What we find in parishes here, is some are very engaged and active, and some are not aware of what is happening even in the neighbouring parishes. So it would be a good endeavour to have some sort of way to gather all the faithful together by way of announcements in every parish, through the bulletin perhaps of events and faith building events in parishes of the Archdiocese. We want more prayer and Eucharistic centred prayer in every parish regularly, like a Holy Hour of Adoration in every</p>

parish. Some parishes in the group don't have this in their parishes NOR and are yearning for it. It is only God who can satisfy the deep longing of the heart and manifestation of His Wonder working Holy Spirit, who can work miracles in our family context today. How can the Church encourage smaller communities like a basic Christian Community to reach out to people in need? We need to return to the basics and make a 'Return to God' a priority—to be true to our faith and not hesitate to be a witness! We need more community driven prayer groups, where people can share and express themselves and come together depending on where they are at—different stages of life—young couples, parents, youth, etc. We need to plug the gap of lack of formation for young people. Post-Confirmation to Holy Matrimony and Support for Young People to stay united in Christ and the grace and power of His Holy Spirit in Marriage and Spousal relationships especially. Could we get more Faith formation for Families? We as Couples need help to resolve conflicts and unlearn negative parenting styles we may have grown up with. Can the Church step in and help us build our homes and stable families in the community? We need spiritual formation to stay away from new age practices and yoga.

God is asking us to return to the truth. Sin is real and the evil one is deceiving the community and infiltrating into the Church. We need our priests to be very clear about sin and the need for reconciliation.

I would like our priest to be able to instruct the people in the truth about the gospels, instruct us in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, so many for example do not know that not going to Church on a Sunday is a mortal sin and they need to go to confession before receiving communion again. There are many examples of this, young people living with their partner come to Mass and go to communion, etc. etc. the list goes on. We are not instructing our young people. We seem to think that if we make it easy for them, they will flock to our churches. Making them, young and old feel good about what they are doing. If we tell them it is wrong, we would lose them. Should we not be concerned about pleasing Christ, not the people? Is it not through following Christ and his teachings that we will find true happiness, that through Jesus Christ we will find the strength to overcome the things in our lives that are keeping us from this happiness? Our churches are emptying and people seem to be looking for something different from the world, you cannot get more different to the world then teachings of Jesus Christ let the Church put Christ first in everything we do and the churches will once again little by little begin to fill again. Let our priest be spiritual directors not administrators worrying about the finance of the parish, not concerned about someone who says I am going to another parish because he/she was uncomfortable about the priest saying about the way they are living their lives is counter to the Gospels, let our priest be free to tell the truth of the gospels, the teachings of Christ, when Christ said eat My Body and drink My Blood many walked away he did not call them back and say no I meant this or that, no the truth is the truth those who accept it will stay and learn to love Jesus, why would we want a Church full of people who believe the Bible is just a good story and have no reason to change our lives to receive the promise Jesus Himself gave us that we will be with Him in the place his Father has prepared for us? Please let our churches be places where that is the purpose to get us to the eternal life with Jesus Christ.

The groups were concerned with the relevance of the Church in today's society. When you drill down, both groups had exactly the same concerns—just coming from different cultural perspectives. The two specific groups in the sessions conducted were: 1. Regular parishioners (European) who wanted the Church more relevant to the young. Their children attended Mass only because they were asked to do so; there was no 'meaning' to the Mass for them. A change of format for the Mass from a very rigid, highly symbolic approach (language was a specific focus of the discussion) to a more meaningful structure with language that was more in tune to today's society, was suggested. They also believed the Church had become too 'vanilla' in their responses to moral/contemporary issues. The Church has taken a 'mea culpa' position in recent years—too afraid to stand behind its beliefs and either saying nothing or couching its response in platitudes that diverts away from the issue. It is very difficult being a Catholic when you don't actually know what you are standing for. It was mentioned that it is embarrassing saying you are Catholic. 2. African members of the parish who

come from many suburbs across [ - ]. This meeting was framed around how cultural diversity was not catered for in the archdiocese in particular. They feel that their religious experiences are unheard and devalued here in Australia. Many of the group had been catechists, deacons and thinking of joining the seminary in Africa but since arriving in Australia, there has been no avenue that has been presented to them to assist in continuing their faith. The African community have the following suggestions: - a liaison person (of African background) be appointed by the Diocese to work with the African communities in guiding them what opportunities exist in Australia to further their faith journeys - Catholic institutions such as schools, colleges, aged care and NGO give priority in employment to Catholics as only this way can true Catholic teachings be maintained - The Church needs to listen to the faithful and act promptly when a serious issue arises - the Church must encourage multiculturalism to flourish and enrich the Church by allowing creativity and flexibility when it comes to prayers and liturgical celebrations (particularly singing) - The Church needs to sponsor young talents and those willing to take on learning to play African musical instruments to enhance and put flavours in our performances. - Introduce activities for the youth to bring them to the Church - Conduct inter-parish competitions to promote Catholic presence - Conduct an outdoor Mass once a year that unites all parishes - Encourage (invite) migrants to have active participation in the Church - Conduct workshops for migrants to assist them in understanding the culture of the Church in Australia - Promote the true meaning of Christmas without the political correctness that has become the norm.

Keep the faith, continue to live by the Gospels and put aside the horrific sexual abuse scandal. Pray for better leadership and open and transparent dialogue by being more accountable to parishioners and the whole Catholic Church.

- The Church to be a vibrant and alive place of welcome where liturgical celebrations are meaningful/full of joy. The Church needs to look at other denominations—Pentecostals—what works for them/incorporate some of the good ideas within the Church community. • We need to reach the unchurched, divorced, disillusioned and vulnerable.
- FORMATION of PRIESTS • Current formation of priests appears lacking in any real depth. • A stringent process of vetting the men who wish to join the priesthood is required—their mental wellbeing including psychological and emotional issues Great discernment and involvement in formation and acceptance of prospective seminarians. • Priests need to know their scripture—can proclaim it with passion like the Lutherans/Pentecostals. • Formation in what constitutes a good/knowledgeable homily and how to deliver it; unpacking the gospels and how this relates to our time. • They need to be alive in Christ—this genuine aliveness then transforms their ministry. • Understanding that priesthood is a ministry not job. What does ministry mean? What is servant leadership?
- HERE ARE SOME REALITIES \*Many do not want to bury a pauper because less money for the burial. \*Unavailable to answer the phone day/night for a dying person. We ring other parishes to give the last rights to dying person. \*priests aren't available before or after Masses for parishioners to see them. We are told to email concerns/requests. Where is the human face of Christ in our Church and in our clergy?
- FORMATION OF TEACHERS Teachers who wish to work in a Catholic school need to choose before commencing course so that their formation includes scripture, its historical content, Church history, meaning of the sacraments, catechesis. There needs to be a greater emphasis on scripture in schools.
- FORMATION OF YOUTH It seems that the work of priests and parishes gets transferred back to the schools. We need to look at what are the parishes doing or not doing. The Church needs to look at employing Youth Ministry or Campus Ministry people dedicated to the youth of parish and high schools. Some form of commitment to Christ a 'Rite of Passage' is required for young people as there is nothing after Confirmation which would have been better placed to be celebrated in High school. Look at when young people received all the sacraments.
- PRIESTS The Church needs to look at having married priests and invite priests who have left the

priesthood and welcome them back if appropriate. Have some part time priests in parishes to assist in visiting the sick, nursing homes, dying, funeral, etc. There needs to be a mechanism in the Church where review of priests is undertaken by the hierarchy, the laity and parishioners. The current model does not work. When a priest has some form of mental illness, he should not be appointed a parish priest, only assistant priest. The Church should make it mandatory for him to undertake treatment. Know your priests.

I think God is asking us to talk about and respond to the terrible stain of child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church. I feel we need strong leadership, we need to talk openly about the issues and focus on the victims of abuse and try to address their problems. I have been encouraged by the recent letter by Archbishop [ - ] on this issue, I was concerned when my local parish celebrated Sunday Mass without mentioning anything concerning the current abuse allegations but heartened when I read the Archbishops response. I don't think we can have business as usual when there is so much turmoil within the Church.

We need to stop being an abusive Church and become a Christlike Church. Sexual abuse is being address but financial abuse and the abuse of parishioners who want to be able to have a voice in what happens in their parish but are cut down by their parish priest who says "I've decided on xxx and that is what is going to happen", by priests who are uncontactable and unapproachable needs to stop. Priests need to be accountable. They need to have the care of the long-term parishioners in their hearts not the short-term achievements they want to be known for. Clericalism needs to be eradicated. People who want to use their talents for the Church should be given that opportunity. Church roles especially archdiocesan roles need to be shared around, advertised and given clear communication. It is always the chosen few moving from one committee to the next. We need new blood, both male and female. Female deacons would be a great opportunity for the Church. Women have so much experience in life and are often the first approached when there is an issue. Many a time I was asked to approach the parish priest if someone needed something or wanted change. I acted like a mediatrix between parishioners and the parish clergy even though I had no official role in the parish. Women deacons would be a great asset to the Church.

I think God is asking us to listen, to serve the 'other' (the weak, the marginalised, and the disadvantaged) with hospitality and inclusiveness, and to embrace a strong sense of stewardship.

That parishes undertake a renewal process from the pews to the pulpit—priest.

It's time for a Great Spiritual Renewal for Australia! Note: The quickest way to achieve this is to conduct lots and lots of LISS—"Life In The Spirit Seminars." These LISS are cheap to conduct and the results are astonishingly fast. The former Catholic diocese that I came from made attending LISS compulsory before the sacrament of confirmation. Australia can follow this too. And If Catholic Church in Australia is really, really serious about the Great Spiritual Renewal, start the LISS from top down, starting with the archbishop, bishops, priests and the parishioners.

Spiritual renewal seems to be most necessary at this time. Adults with an adult faith strengthened by prayer are best equipped as evangelisers to our nation. I am a member of the Secular Franciscan Order and the formation programme is an effective path to discipleship. I believe that this is one of the gifts that the Spirit has to offer the Church in Australia in our day. Although the Peace Prayer wasn't written by St Francis of Assisi, I find in it a beautiful and simple programme for Christian living. I would like to see this prayer shared through the Church's many agencies. In times of conflict in families, where there is bullying in schools, where people struggle to believe, the prayer reminds us that we are all instruments of God's peace wherever we are, whatever situation we are in. For young couples beginning their married life, the peace prayer reminds us to be willing to listen and understand one another. What a blessing this would be. Paths for people to return to the faith are important. There need to be many of these that offer opportunities for people to approach the Church once more. An educated laity is important for this. People who know their faith and are willing to hear the person who approaches them and allow the Holy Spirit to work in them.

[We as a Catholic service organisation] think that God is asking us in the Australian Catholic Church to look closely at all its structures and make any changes necessary to allow better evangelisation, particularly changes in Governance. See attachment.

These are dark days for the Catholic Church in Australia with an increasingly secular society, fewer people, particularly young people, attending Mass and the conviction of George Pell. I think people are questioning the relevance of Catholicism to their every-day lives. The history of child abuse and cover up, facilitated by an arrogant belief in absolute power amongst leaders in the Church, has done much damage to the reputation of the Church. Media and social media are rightly casting the Church in a negative light. I believe that God is setting us a test of faith and a test of leadership: whether (a) Australian Catholics are able to bear witness to their faith in times of negative sentiment and (b) whether the Catholic leadership are able to turnaround the negativity, atone for the wrongs that were done in the past and put in place a better organisation that truly practises what it preaches and is relevant to modern-day society.

I think God is asking us to be: 1. loyal to the teachings of His Son, Jesus Christ, courageous and not lose hope honest and accept that our first responsibility is to save our own soul before trying to save others willing to climb up out of our comfort zone and become more proactive Christians. 2.1 more caring and sharing—not only of our good fortune but also our endeavours. So often we cling to individual group identity when, in many instances, combining efforts would be more effective. 2.2 Accept that we, as members of the Body of Christ, must all do our bit ... that we have collective as well as individual spiritual responsibilities. Leaving it all to the hierarchy of the Church is not good enough—everyone must pull their weight. 3. Recognise and acknowledge the CAFETERIA approach to Catholicism is undermining, not strengthening the faith of either the individual or the Church as a whole. 4. Use the talents He has given us to wake up and become better informed about: a. our faith and how we should live it b. prevailing ideologies of the world we live in c. the inherent dangers of some secular policies. Example: The Family Planning Association (FPA) is an organisation which, through persistence over decades has infiltrated its way into the community psyche to become a household word and the recipient of taxpayer funding. How many Catholics, lay or religious, know the FPA actively promotes promiscuity, abortion (which they consider a form of contraception), 'serial monogamy' (one-night stands), disseminate misinformation about Natural Family Planning methods and influence school health programmes, etc. Note: Report on the Seminar—"FAMILY PLANNING IN THE 80's" 24th September, 1981 outlines a scheme that divided the growth of the FPA into five stages. 'Stage V reads ... 'planned parenthood is accepted by government' ... 'in the final stage the message as well as the means become part of people's everyday lives ...' This scheme is now a reality. (copy available) Example 2: excerpt taken from 'THE POLITICS OF HOMOSEXUALITY' booklet (1973) which sets out 8 basic demands. All but the 7th demand have been realised. Demand no. 7 reads: 'Abolition of all laws relating to the age of consent for boys and girls.' (copy available).

As staff in a Catholic school, we think God is asking us to support and guide our community on their Faith journey.

To develop a stronger relationship with God and to be united as people of God. I think He is asking for more unity in the Catholic Church, mostly between older generations and the youth. We would like to close the gap of disconnection between the authority figures and the laity. The Catholic schools need more education on current issues and less on the history of religion. They need to make the classes more engaging and less dry.

I believe God is asking everyone young and old to reflect on what their lives look like and what path they're on. More specifically, I believe that God would want each of us to analyse what kind of person they are, what are they doing to ensure they are following the right path, what are they doing to try and strengthen their relationship with God, what are they doing to ensure that they hear God's message and can pass that on to society. Additionally, in this time of social media and changes in laws (for the good and bad) what are people doing to ensure they do not get caught up in the media frenzy. I believe God is also asking us to reflect on what we believe in and what we stand for and what lengths we are willing to go to ensure that belief is maintained. If we don't stand for

something we stand for nothing. I believe that many people who claim to believe in God do so without actually making a genuine effort to invest in the relationship. Going to church once a week and trying to generally avoid doing bad is not good enough in my opinion. I believe that God would want us to do things that are difficult, that make us uncomfortable and that cause us to have to give things up and make sacrifices. I strongly believe that there is salvation in suffering and at this point in our modern society, I don't believe people want to suffer, instead I think we get caught up in going along with convenience and because we try to do good things, every once in a while people think that this is enough to be a good Catholic. Specific examples are that the sacrament of reconciliation is not taken seriously in this day and age. Most people attend confession twice a year yet take the Eucharist every Sunday. I also believe that most people don't realise how much effort we need to put in to avoid sinning each day because we convince ourselves that our actions were appropriate. An example of this is someone coming to church late and thinking this is ok, or someone seeing others do the wrong thing and not saying anything, wearing inappropriate clothing to church, forgetting or just not thinking we need to pray morning and night, or someone failing to admit an opinion i.e. admitting their opinion about gay marriage for example because of a fear of persecution by their friends and even family. I believe God would like us to take these things seriously and repent and not become complacent and just assume we'll all go to heaven because we believe in God. I feel strongly that Australian have an enormous challenge to face in this new world where faith and God have been replaced by comfort, material things, and convenience. I also believe we need to challenge society in their views and not just say that the Church needs to change because society has. God's principles have not changed and we shouldn't dilute our faith and beliefs because others trick us into believing that it's the humane thing to do.

To stay true to our Catholic faith. To not water down the truth. We need to know the truth (formation of the Catholics firstly and most importantly in the doctrine of our faith and where this doctrine originated from). Many Catholics are poorly formed in their faith and the schools are not forming the children as the parents have almost always NO formation. We must start here. If parents want to send their child to a Catholic school they must attend formation sessions in understanding Catholic teaching. The teachers must have this foremost. We must proclaim the truth. Students at [ - ] college in [ - ] are currently being taught that same sex relationships and transsexual individuals are normal and to be celebrated—the teachers are telling and teaching this in health Ed. This is wrong for a Catholic school and these schools which do not adhere to Catholic teaching should be forced to become not part of the CEO. As a parent of young children, I am deeply concerned for our youth in a world that believes that the Catholic Church has no meaning for them. The most disturbing part of this is the Catholic schools are not Catholic at all and are misleading our children and families, we must disband the CEO and all Catholic schools should just be independent not have the Catholic name.

Equal opportunities for women, Women in the priesthood, Priests allowed to marry, Weekend liturgies to be more engaging for young families and children, Divorced people not to be segregated and be able to take part in all sacraments including being able to remarry in the Church, Women able to go on the pill.

To be open to a dialogue with many people, with diverse people, with Catholics and non-Catholics. To listen to people tell us about their lives, the challenges they face every day. To especially listen to people who love the Lord, but are estranged from the Church in some way. To not bring the same old preconceived thinking and answers to the table. In countless ways, the Church is doing an unbelievable work of God's mission of mercy and evangelisation; but in other ways, we seem to have lost our way. Individuals or the Church as an institution can come across as arrogant, instead of as humble.

I believe God is asking us to be welcoming and not to be afraid to invite people to come and see. Encouraging parishioners to be more involved in parish life through parish Groups, social life and most importantly through having Perpetual Adoration in all parishes. Recognizing the importance of Youth ministries and Youth groups. Ongoing formation following confirmation through Youth Groups

and ministries within the parish. To be a truly welcoming Church to all people. Giving everyone the opportunity regardless of abilities to participate in parish life and ministries. After confirmation many Catholics do not grow their childhood faith into an adult faith—offer in all parishes, faith development opportunities. God is asking us to make our Church into a place that is vibrant and full of the love of God and friendship with each other. Make the good things about the Church more widely known and take the focus off the bad.

A return to REVERENCE in our Churches. For them to once again become holy places of worship, chastity and the sanctity is respected. No gossiping, recalling weekend exploits, no handshakes to begin Mass or clapping a personal 'achievement' rather than giving all the Glory to God. A return to kneeling in front of the tabernacle, and on entering the pew, quiet in the Church for prayer and reflection, no use of mobile phones and the priest to take his role as shepherd of the parish seriously and NOT allow 'others' to distribute Holy Communion while he sits down and waits (and yes, this did happen @ Masses presided over by [ - ]). For our children, who are still attending, to experience the smells and bells to help them understand the mystery of the Mass and not be turned off by the 'elders' disrespect before, during and after. For those serving, to be in a state of Grace—many turn up for their 'volunteer' position in mortal sin having not been to Mass since the last time they volunteered (children from our local parish school are encouraged to serve and receive Holy Communion yet willingly admit they are NOT regularly attending Mass outside of this)—it makes a mockery for those children who are being encouraged to confess regularly, attend Mass on Sundays and engage in the Church. Death, Judgement, Heaven and Hell ... not mentioned at our parish and certainly NOT encouraged by the priest for the lay volunteers ... any return to reverence is met with FEAR—it will turn the people off—what about GOD? What about asking the families that are remaining true to the one, holy Catholic apostolic Church with NO support? The Church is like a hall, a temple selling wares (especially with fundraising drives) and you are shouted down by those that are not bringing their families ... the Holy Mass at our parish has become a 'performance' for the dwindling parishioners and as the numbers reduce, the performance heightens ... an urgent need to return to REVERENCE.

1. To reach out and heal the brokenness in the lives of those hurt by the Church. 2. To be more welcoming and accepting and inclusive of ALL people. To be a Church of Good News. 3. To address the role of women and laity in the Church. Women to be ordained as Deacons. The laity to be more involved in decision-making and governance. 4. To make the Church relevant to people, especially young people, living in a modern pluralistic society. We need to invest in creating resources that speak to a new generation, resources that are relevant. We should look at what other Christian churches are doing who are successfully engaging young people and use their ideas. We need to create resources that are accessible through social media platforms and other online resources that can answer the questions of young people, build their faith. To be a Church of social outreach and not just words and ritual. 5. To not be afraid to change including making changes in our liturgies Traditional liturgies and prayers mean much to committed Catholics and need to be retained for those to whom they speak but their language only speaks to a select group of the Church and excludes others. Ensuring our language in our sacramentary is a language that speaks to all people. The latest translation distances God and is often so grammatically poor that priests in Australia struggle to proclaim the prayers without stumbling. A great liturgist can compose the presiding prayers in ways that make the liturgy sing and connect the theme of the readings throughout the Mass. There are great composers of prayer and liturgy in our communities but their gifts are being wasted. The language of our liturgies needs to be universal and inclusive. It is time to adapt the readings of the day to the language that includes women. There are not just “Brothers” or “man” sitting in our congregations. 6. To support Catholic schools and teachers We need to create the very best resources for schools that support teachers who are not actively living their faith. Teachers do not have time to create their own, investment in engaging digital, interactive resources. We need to provide teachers not just with knowledge but with opportunities that speak to ‘the heart’ and which help our teachers “fall in love with” and see the relevance of faith in their own lives. We need to

invest in providing the best and most relevant retreat experiences we can and to have a list of highly recommended people that schools can access. We need well-resourced retreat centres not in the busyness of the city but near forests and beaches that are affordable for school budgets. We cannot take teachers to outdated campsites and think we can provide them with an experience that will enhance their spirituality. We need teaching resources that engage the heart and not just the head and resources/formation that allows teachers to respond to the tricky questions asked from non-believers.

Make us Catholic AGAIN! I encourage you to attend a parish school or College Mass. Protestant songs, no kneeling or reverence, held in a 'hall or gym', lay Eucharistic ministers (certainly NOT extraordinary) including Yr 12s who do not attend on Sundays but see it as an elite school position, children NOT understanding the reverence needed when receiving Holy Communion and instead slipping it into their pockets or hiding it among the pews ... students being 'forced' to stand in the communion line to receive a 'blessing' from a lay person/student because they understand that ONLY CONSECRATED HANDS should be touching Our Lord ... again, lay person HAS NO AUTHORITY to bless anyone—highly dangerous spiritually given what is known about their lifestyles ... and finally Aboriginal smoking ceremonies—pagan spiritual ceremonies in Catholic schools, churches (inside and out)—what is going on?

God is asking us to believe in his mercy on our sins shown through his son Jesus Christ and bring this mercy to all the people.

Be kind to each other, keep the ten commandments and follow Jesus' teachings. What a happy world it would be.

When praying on the question posed, I keep coming back to the scripture near the end of John's Gospel—Jesus confronts Simon-Peter and asks him three times to feed his sheep. It's a classic scene aimed at the figure of Peter no doubt, but also to all who are called to 'lead the flock'. You can almost hear the urgency in Jesus' words that echoes through to today. My people are oh so hungry, please feed them—lead them. I suspect, as a committed, informed and active Catholic Christian that the way the Church is lead, including its over-reliance on the priesthood, is a bottleneck for the work of the Holy Spirit—and that is only the least of it. The institutional failings that has allowed for the sexual abuse crisis was another outworking of this. The Church is called to be served by more than a clerical class that have been asked to be all things to all people. Let leaders lead, let preachers preach, let healers heal, let organisers organise, etc. The lack of women and lay (including married voices) in general in the real Church structure is party to this; an all celibate/male priesthood while perhaps satisfying a theological view of sorts, simply adds a layer of complete irrelevance that the Church is to many current and would-be followers of Christ. This counters the heart of Christ as Emmanuel—God amongst us, a God who was made entirely relevant to those who mattered. Open the windows, open your doors, let the reality of our world be faced and served, especially let the clerical systems, so easy to hide amongst, be opened up and made but one (albeit important) plank in how our Church is lead and formed. Those in power, loosen your grip such that the Holy Spirit can actually work rather than relying on your own strength and ways (cf. Prv 3:5). One area this should be manifestly done is in the preaching. I can't see why some (certainly not all) parishes need to sit through preaching that is as poor as it is. Why can't the local archdiocese establish a preaching authority office, then find the good teachers and preachers in the Church and give them the authority to preach and send them out to the parishes—or better still, be found among the parishes they are connected to already. They are there, I've heard them. This is one example, but there would be others. More broadly, I believe the Church has the resources and the living Truth to grow and to be a place where people's longing hearts are fed. But it simply won't happen just because it is there; no amount of self-edifying hubris will change the fact of the matter; if the people are unable to engage the truth of Christ, the Church becomes redundant, not the Church at all. I pray for all those in Church leadership, that they truly have the heart of Christ as they lead us forward. I still believe in a God fully present in the Church, it's time for certain structures (particularly clericalism) to get out of the way so that this God can be clearly seen and experienced.

<p>- Education and programs for disengaged and disadvantaged young people - Encouraging young people to participate - Being open to change, things don't have to be the way they have always been - Employ Aboriginal people in ministry - For the Church to relate to Aboriginal culture and teach from this space - Educating non-Aboriginal people about our Aboriginal story - To have healing spaces for Aboriginal people - Stop judging people - Encouraging people to experience their self-worth and value - To go out and help other people - Aboriginal play groups - To ask for forgiveness for all who have been hurt.</p>
<p>Thank you for seeking out the opinions of ordinary people in the Church on this important question. I believe God is asking us to feed his lambs and his sheep, to give our lives to the service of others. In the present context, when it has been shown that the Church has damaged so many lives through its response to child sexual abuse and through cruelty in orphanages, this means the Church needs to act with kenosis, an emptying out of all attachment to power and status, and with an embracing of humility. Only by doing this can the Church respond with true Christian love, with genuine altruism, without thought of self to those who come forward seeking help. Edmund Campion, in his book 'Rockchoppers,' argued that traditional Australian Catholicism was a religion of law, preoccupied with authority, regulation and submission. After Vatican II, the re-orientation towards a pastoral model of Church had a positive effect, but did not go far enough. The Church as an institution did much good, through its social justice teachings and ministry, liturgical practices and through its charitable agencies. At the turn of the millennium the Australian bishops issued an apology for past wrongdoings, yet the Redress schemes that were put in place in the 1990s for survivors of sexual abuse were unjust, and privileged the protection of the Church's reputation over the needs of the victims. These schemes were publicised in the Catholic press at the time as a sincere and principled response to damaged individuals, but they were actually an attempt to minimise litigation, bad publicity and potentially large damages claims. Here was a perfect instance of the Church behaving as a human institution, seeking to protect its reputation and its worldly wealth, rather than acting in accordance with the gospel. I believe that God is asking us to ensure that we respect that everyone is equal in Christ, and this must be reflected in our Church structures as well as in our individual lives. Holiness depends on conduct not role; in our responses to those harmed by Church personnel, we must do what is best for them, and this must be the principle that guides us in any future challenges. To achieve this metanoia, I believe the Church must open the door to all people who feel the call to ordination, including women and married people. There needs to be transparency and accountability in Church governance and decision-making, and this should entail giving the laity greater involvement. Suspicion of alternative approaches to Catholic spirituality needs to be lessened, as many of these voices fuse the best of Christian teaching with other forms of knowledge, providing a modern idiom for our tradition. Only by such a radical change of heart and change of practice can the Church regain the respect of the wider community, of its lapsed and hurt members, and of young people.</p>
<p>With the attack on our Catholic faith by the secular media, hostile politicians and other groups within the community, combined with the persecution of our clergy, either with scurrilous attacks using the legal system, or subtle attacks of tenets of our faith such as the attempt to break the sacrosanct seal of Confession, I believe God, through the Holy Spirit, wants us to strengthen our defences as members of the Church Militant to protect our Church by NOT caving in to the external attacks and attempts to change our doctrine.</p>
<p>- To be confident, open and inclusive, as a nation, as a Church and as individual parishes.</p>
<p>I think the Church need to provide a post-baptism adult formation. It is not enough just attending Mass every Sunday. We need to grow in faith each day, to be closer to Christ.</p>
<p>To act with justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God. I feel that God is asking us to see ourselves as partners with the community, who walk alongside with them rather than judge them or see ourselves as above others. To spend a significant amount of resources training Aboriginal people to be ministry leaders. To develop an Australian Theology and liturgical approaches that embrace Aboriginal perspectives. To listen to the wisdom of Aboriginal spirituality. To listen to and give</p>

authority to the experiences of women who are equal bearers of Christ in the world. To train people in the radical transforming message of the Gospel. To embrace an inclusive theology of LGBTIQ. For Theological colleges to make the study of Feminist Theology essential. To teach the role of women in the Church throughout history, to invest to Female Biblical Scholarship. To listen to, explore and embody the Cosmic Christ. To teach this to people. A rediscovery of the Cosmic Christ for a modern day is vital. To creativity expand the concept of Church to be beyond just the parish. To encourage people to be engaged with a wider community rather than just the parish. To listen to the lived experiences of Catholic people's sexuality and spirituality.

How are you going to bring the good news of the gospel to the people outside the Church?  
Concretely, how will you outwardly evangelise when Church credibility is so wounded by scandal?  
Actions, not sentiments are needed.

For the Catholic Church in Australia to be strong and steadfast in its truth and tradition, in the face of the onslaught of secularism, modernism and other "isms". To not be agreeable or entertain the lies being perpetrated in media, politics, culture and general western society, and instead be like an iron anchor holding a ship in rough and stormy seas.

A Church that is salt and light to the earth, in this evil generation. A Church that is set apart and does not conform to the ways of the world, in this evil generation. A Church that forms my people to be set apart and witnesses, martyrs, to the Truth. A Church that forms my people to be courageous in the face of persecution from the world. A Church that is timeless, as I am timeless. A Church that is holy and set apart. A Church that sanctifies and makes holy my children. A Church that is visibly different and recognisable as set apart from this world and this wicked generation. Return the holy liturgy to its saving power. Bow down in my sight and humble thyself in my sight. Kneel before me and know that I am your God. Teach my children to revere me in my presence.

God is wanting his Church to be reflective of Jesus, chaste and humble. God wants The Blessed Virgin Mary to "be officially recognised as Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate, promising that the Lady of All Nations will then grant peace, true peace to the world." It is well known in Portugal that the reason why the country was not attacked in World War II is because of the official consecration of Portugal to the protection of Our Lady. Why don't the Catholic bishops of Australia invoke Her protection for Australia?

God is asking what God has always asked—for us to be in relationship with God.

Clearly, the purpose of the Church is to help people LOVE GOD and show this by LOVING OTHERS—ALL OTHERS. That includes our friends, our enemies, and those in between. If we want to love others, we need to BE FAITHFUL to God first, otherwise what we intend as love of others will turn out to be something else, something second-rate at best and more likely downright harmful to them. Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life". Our love for neighbour/friend/family/enemy always has to take cognisance of the truth—which can be a difficult balancing act. For example, if we are not faithful to Christ's teaching on marriage, and we indicate to our young people that it's OK to live with a series of boyfriends/girlfriends (or same-sex partners), we participate in a lie that will hurt them. They will be exposed to heartbreak, STD's, and decreased ability to trust if they ever do get married. It is statistically clearly demonstrated that children do best in the long-term committed married relationship of their biological parents. If we don't at least teach the truth about marriage, our children are deprived of a possible protection against becoming the parents of their own unhappy children who are damaged by divorce or other stresses and traumas. We need to be faithful on surrogacy and IVF, both for the physical and spiritual/emotional risks to the children and the surrogate mothers (and the frozen "embryos"—people with souls), all of which are well documented. If we expose children to greater risks of unhappiness, that will affect the wellbeing of both the parents and children, because parents suffer with their children, and so on down the generations... to the third and fourth generation, as the Bible says. If the Catholic Church does not hold out faithfully to Christ's teaching, who will? And what are we here for? We need to teach our congregations that having old people around does us more good than harm, and that suffering CAN BE redemptive (if we bring God into it). On the other hand, we need to be open,

sensitive and non-judgemental to all people—those who agree with us, and those who don't. People who disagree with us may not have too many scruples about presenting what we say about an action/principle as a personal attack on themselves. This can make things very emotional. We need to expect high standards of patience, tolerance and forbearance from ourselves, and set an example to those around us. And we need to be clear guidance from the pulpit—what Catholic teaching is, and how we lovingly live by it and get it across to others. Not an easy task. I am very impressed with Martin Luther King's sermons on "Love your enemies"—they are very practical and uncompromising (easily found on Google). That's the kind of guidance we need.

I think God is asking Australian Catholics to more faithfully live out His example of love. I strongly feel we have lost sight of this core message of the Bible. Jesus taught a radical message about love and what that looks like in our lives. The early Christians saw how fundamentally different the type of love we are called to is and taught that the rest of the world would know we are Christians by this love. Instead of being known for love, the Catholic Church is known for crushing and corrupting love. The Church (and in particular, the hierarchy) have become the Pharisees that Jesus came and so harshly admonished—legalistic with a focus on an inflexible prescription to rules, more concern about appearing pious and superior than living love, full of sin and utterly hypocritical. In nothing is that more clear than in the Church's response to child sexual abuse. Jesus proposed a radical alternative to the Pharisees' understanding of religion—and the Church in Australia today must make a radical change to realign to this core message of love. I believe the Australian Catholic Church is called to do more good. To be bold and brave in defending the vulnerable and outcast—rather than the hierarchy. To stand up for issues that matter, not just those that are convenient. The powerful leaders of the Catholic Church are very capable of getting their views on matters publicised but are not using these opportunities for good. Why is the Catholic Church not one of the loudest voices defending human rights, protecting refugees and preventing domestic violence? Why is the voice of the Church silent on these matters, but vocal on issues of gender and same-sex marriage and when it speaks, it is a voice not of love and compassion but condemning and closed-minded? Same-sex marriage for example was an opportunity to preach about the importance of love and the value of the sacrament of marriage, but instead it was entirely negative. To do more good, we need to actively seek these opportunities. The Catholic Church associated charities such as Caritas and Catholic Mission are not enough to fulfil our requirement to do good. The shift in the not-for-profit sector is making these charities more akin to corporations than genuine charities. While this professional not-for-profit sector is important, it is not enough. The Catholic Church must become much more involved in the community and helping the vulnerable. It is through good works that the Church can become relevant to the lives of Australians again.

1. Tell the truth. 2. Be the best person you can be. 3. Learn the catechism. 4. Put the catechism on the internet. 5. Have a single official web-site as the authentic source of the Catholic position on core moral issues which can be viewed by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, e.g. journalists. 6. Be serious about life. 7. Have an official online presence, e.g. an official YouTube site. Worthy speakers should be uploaded to YouTube, this has an amazing reach. 8. Ask Geraldine Doogue (who is a mass-media communicator) and Frank Brennan (a popular intellectual commentator) about what is needed to help heal the relationship with Australian society. 9. Understand that being a Catholic is a challenge. Following Christ is a badge of honour that each person can be proud of. Challenge and sacrifice for the common good and individual salvation is a message that can be especially appealing to young people. This is what gives life meaning.

I believe that God is asking us as a Church to return to living the principles of Christ—"To love others as you would like to be loved.": To be the people who speak for and act for justice in our world, Who care for the poor and marginalised, Who listen to and learn from our Aboriginal Australians' Who care for and show stewardship of our planet. Our Church has become a rule bound institution run by celibate men. It is seen by society at best as out of touch and irrelevant and at worst as corrupt and hypocritical. Yet there are many many good people and priests in the Church. However, we are not those with the power. Vatican II talked about listening to the laity, giving it voice, using the expertise

of the people but it has not happened. *Humanae vitae* is an excellent example of how the Church chose to ignore medicine and science and the input from lay experts. As a female physician and an academic who teaches at a Catholic University, I have continued in the Church because of the community in my local parish and because of my liturgical experiences mostly through music. The fellowship of the music group and the opportunity to work for the poor and marginalised have given me a purpose within the Church. But I have little in common with the hierarchical Church and its structures. My spiritual journey has been nourished by people not by Church structures, by my reading and learning and by the University. It is my honest belief after much prayer that the Church needs to find its way back to its roots, to the teachings of Christ and to apply them to the twenty first-century. This should include female priests and married priests. It should also include an approach to sexuality that applies ethical principles alongside modern scientific understandings of sexuality, gender, homosexuality and contraception. In saying this I am in no way suggesting that the Church should support killing in the form of abortion or euthanasia (despite noting that historically the Church supported slavery, capital punishment and still allows killing in a just war). I am however suggesting that to insist that one area of Catholic life remain in the dark ages while others, such as using medication to prevent the consequences of illness, take advantage of scientific knowledge is inconsistent. I pray that the bishops have the courage and the humility to follow Christ into the twenty first century.

To pray more individually and with our family. Daily Mass times are mostly not family oriented. Which family with school age kids can go to daily Mass at 8AM or 12PM? Only the elders and the unemployed can do so. If it is in CBD, then the workers can join in but not family. ARCHBISHOPS and bishops should ask priests in every parish to adjust their Mass times so families can attend together.

I believe God is asking us to be saints. The Church is ever in need of renewal, and the true reformers have always been the saints—lives of evident sanctity and joy that by their very existence are the most convincing witnesses to the love of God and the value of the Church. At times in the past, I sought various structural reforms within the Church as a means of making her more ‘accessible’ to others, but I now believe this approach to be something of a red-herring. Young people who take their faith seriously aren’t looking for the Church to out-world the world. They aren’t looking for the Church to be cool, or hip, or relevant. They are drawn to the Church because they grew up in the midst of the world, and the world failed to satisfy the deepest longings of their soul. They are drawn to the Church because she is timeless and true, a sure guide in a rudderless world. In short, they are drawn to the Church because it is the Body of Christ. If the Church in Australia is entering a period of increased harassment (‘persecution’ is probably too strong a word) this may not be the worst thing in the world. Though we may be forced to reduce our institutional footprint somewhat, this may have the benefit of sorting the wheat from the chaff. Smaller communities of stronger faith may in fact be the launching pad for a new evangelisation with real vigour. In summary, I believe we are being asked to foster an increase in faith (both in our parishes and our institutions). As part of this, we might strive to strengthen Catholic identity, encourage more reverent liturgy, etc., but ultimately it is about facilitating a genuine encounter with the living God.

I think God is asking us to love and accept everyone regardless of their sexuality. Jesus showed love and compassion for everyone and told us to love one another. If we withhold someone’s rights (marriage to the person you love) we are not loving them.

God is asking us in Australia at this time to educate our children in Catholic schools to follow the teaching of Jesus. Asking us to teach our children the history of the Catholic Church and its impact on Western Civilisation and how it changed the world. Asked us to arm our children, through education from year 1 to year 12, with the teachings of Jesus, teaching the history of the Catholic Church so that they are well equipped to practise their faith and in turn defend their faith in the public space. Asked us to educate our children in their faith, to make sure they are fully informed of their faith so they are able to discern and question what they now hear and see on social media in 2019.

The [ - ] Religious Education curriculum needs to change in order to be more appealing to young people. We feel that the current high school Religious Education curriculum in [ - ] focuses too much

on the history, structures and traditions of the Catholic Church, and not enough on the future of the Church and how this faith relates to our own lives. We are repeatedly being taught the parts of the Mass and the structures of the Catholic Church and being told that they are this way because that's the way that they've always been. Hence, we only gain an understanding of the formalities of the Church, without understanding how this applies to the current world that we live in and the issues we've experiencing as young people. For many young people in Catholic Education, Religious Education classes are the only connection that they have to the Catholic faith and as a result of the way that the curriculum currently is, young people are turning away from Catholicism as they view it as a religion that is outdated and doesn't apply to them. Many students said that they particularly enjoyed the topic of abortion in Year 11 Religion and Life, as it was a topic that was more engaging and could be applied to our own modern society. In this way, we were able to apply the religious beliefs of the Catholic Church to an issue that affects us and our own society, and we are able to see how religion can and does apply to our own lives as young people.

Priests need to be trained so that they are taught how to deliver the Mass in a way that young people can understand and be engaged with. The current way in which the Mass is delivered isn't engaging to young people and means that we can't relate the formal words of the Mass to our own lives. We recognise that it's important to preserve the traditions of the Mass, but we believe that this needs to be done in such a way that it still appeals to the young people of the Church. The formal language of the Mass means that we don't understand what the words mean, the importance of them or how they apply to our own lives. We all agree that this can be made better by adjusting small parts of the Mass to enable young people to understand. For example, the priest at one student's parish asks the young people of the Church to fist bump each other instead of giving each other the sign of peace. This simple action modernises the Mass and means that young people can understand what's actually happening. The homilies that priests give during Mass often don't apply to our own lives either. The examples given and way in which the homily is presented often isn't very engaging for young people. A priest who often comes to our school Masses presents homilies that we feel should be similar to those given by more priests in the Catholic Church. He delivers homilies that directly show us how the Gospel reading applies to our own lives. He talks about how the reading applies to what we experience at school and how we interact with our friends and parents. This makes the Mass more engaging, and means that we, as young people, feel like we're a part of the Mass too. Due to both the formal language of the Mass and the homilies that priests give, we feel that priests often go through the motions of the Mass without stopping to think if it applies to our own lives or if we feel connected to what's being said. As a result, we feel that this makes Mass a chore which doesn't benefit our own spiritual development or connection to God.

The Catholic Church needs to work together to create a sense of community amongst young people within both individual parishes and the Church as a whole. As high-school aged students, we feel that there isn't any sense of community within the Church for people our age. Many students noted that there are activities and groups for people both younger and older than us, but not for our own demographic. Many of our parishes have Children's Liturgy groups for young children and for older people there are prayer groups and many different social events. As a result, we feel that we aren't getting the community benefits of being religious, and we feel out-of-place within the Church community itself. This turns many young people away from the Church, as we don't feel that we belong and there aren't any other young people that we can feel connected to within the Church. We feel that many of Christian denominations, and the Catholic Church in the past, have done a much better job at being able to create this sense of community amongst young people. Many of us noted that when our parents were our age, they had many youth groups and programs, where they were able to meet like-minded young people and talk about their experiences with religion. One student who belongs to a Baptist church noted that at her church there are many activities for young people outside of church times. These activities aren't necessarily strictly religious but are activities

in which a sense of community is created and friendships amongst the young people can be formed. She explained how this meant that amongst the groups of young people, they are able to talk about how their faith applies to them individually in their own lives. We believe that this sense of community for young people is lacking within the Catholic Church, and as a result is turning people away from the Church, as we aren't able to share our experiences with other young people and we don't feel connected to the Church community. This sense of community would allow young people to be able to relate religion to their own lives and learn from each other. We believe that the Church needs to create these spaces, structures and groups where young people can be engaged, where priests can show them how religion applies to their own lives and where young people can gather and express their own faith.

There needs to be positions available for female leadership within the Church. As young females, we feel that the fact that there aren't currently any opportunities for females to become leaders in the Catholic Church, is something that deters us from being fully engaged and connected to the Church. Currently, the highest form of leadership that females can be within a parish is a senior altar server, and we think that there needs to be a position made where females are able to implement more change into their parish communities. Even though we want to be able to implement change in our Church communities, we wouldn't be able to as there isn't the role available to women to be able to do that within the Church. On top of this, this issue means that as young people, we don't have any female leaders who can be role models for us within the Church. As a result, many young females are turning to other denominations where females have more significant leadership roles, as we would be able to relate and understand them better. One student who belongs to a Baptist Church noted that females in her faith can lead worship, which is the equivalent of saying the homily, and that females often lead youth groups. This makes her feel more connected her Baptist faith, as she relates to the female leader. We recognise that male priesthood within the Church is rooted in Scripture, but we believe that creating a designated female leadership role within the Church would counter this imbalance and enable females to feel more empowered and connected to their faith. There are many issues, such as abortion, which apply specifically to women, and having female leadership within the Church would benefit the teaching of these beliefs. Allowing females to read homilies and lead faith groups would enable females to feel more connected to their Catholic faith.

I believe that we are truly being asked to look at the model of Church and parishes as it operates in Australia today. I firmly believe that our priests should not live in isolation in parish-based presbyteries but live in shared accommodation within local zones along with other priests in the zone. Their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs could be addressed by both employed housekeepers and through building communities of priests that work together for the care of all. In this age of telecommunication there should be no need to have priests living onsite of our churches where that can become vulnerable to any range of social, physical and psychological issues. [Parishes] themselves should all be 'run' in terms of the administrative aspects by employed staff that are trained and managed by the diocese in concert with the local community. In this way, our priests would be better able to care for the community's spiritual and social needs.

That God is telling us to let priests be married. That God is calling us to drive the Diaconate in Australia, if priests are to remain Celibate. That God is telling us to only promote remote and regional priests to the roles of bishops and archbishops, monsignors and cardinals, etc., not 'Career priests' who play it safe and their only desire is to reach the top of the food chain within the Church. That any Clergy must spend at least 10 consecutive years serving in regional and remote parishes prior to any possibility of promotion, much like the policies of the [ - ] Police Force. That those clergy wishing for promotion must receive written endorsement from the parishioners of those remote and regional centres stating that they have promoted and spread the Word, the fire and the passion of our Lord. Those Clergy seeking promotion must submit to an examination by a board of lay parishioners from their previous parishes and clergy, with the parishioners having the deciding vote. Priests that seek positions of authority within the Church must serve a TWO-YEAR MISSION in a 3rd

<p>world country that is not their own. Many of these 'urban' priests that are career priests have never known adversity, crisis or the suffering of the poor or displaced. Apart from working in remote and regional parishes, THEY MUST experience the suffering of the poor and displaced first hand. Example: If Australians want to be promoted within the Australian Church, they must have served on the 'front-line' in India, Malaysia, Vietnam or other countries where the faith is suffering adversity. Only then will they truly gain a passion for the faith. That any Clergy that is suspected of homosexuality or paedophilia should be immediately sent to the closest Monastery for retreat until the investigation is completed (in the case of [ - ], [ - ]). This will keep those venerable institutions open and functioning. Clergy that are found to be Homosexual should be immediately and permanently sent to a Monastery unless they renounce their vows. That priests convicted of paedophilia, after finishing their jail sentence, should be sent to monasteries for permanent penance unless they decide to renounce their vows or are defrocked. IF CELIBACY IS TO CONTINUE: Let widowed men take the vows of priesthood if they so they choose. They have lived their lives, and their wives have gone to heaven. They are now alone by God's choosing. In the USA they are doing this, and I believe that it would be a good form to bring people back to the faith and assist in dealing with the shortage of priests. That the Church continues to guard the sacredness of the Confession.</p>
<p>The Church must define the role of the priesthood to offer sacrifice, to administer the sacraments and the pastoral care for God's people.</p>
<p>Why is Australia becoming more secular? Are we reaching out to age groups 12–18, 19–25, 26–30 and 31–40? These groups are influential for our future. There is a reason why they are broken into those age groups. Don't be simplistic in how the Church thinks. See ...</p>
<p>To rediscover the essential of our life (the summum bonum, the supreme good) to work to become the "ideal person" living the "ideal life", learning to better use the two great helps (the two Model Life) God has given us: Christ, the living Word, and The New Testament, the written Word. To find the Way to the Ideal Life, the Ideal Man needs: - REASON, for his being alive at all. - SUSTENANCE, man shall not live by bread alone ... God. - SOCIETY, companions of common and homely things. - LANGUAGE, prayer. - PRAISE, the overflow of a full heart. - EDUCATION, teach me to do Thy will in ... obedience. - PROMISE, to be listened, when asking according to Thy will. - SMILE, like Jesus in the cross, to have tried to do Thy will and be ready and happy to hug The Father.</p>
<p>What God is asking of us as a community of believers—the Church—is that we give more attention to the teachings of Jesus Christ as expressed in the New Testament.</p>
<p>A more equitable Church with women having a greater input in the Church's beliefs and rules.</p>
<p>Making people feel welcome in Church by both priests and parishioners. Help one another and accept all people. Priests to become more involved in the Community especially small country communities not just say Mass and disappear. People to be encouraged to support our priests. Priests be allowed to marry. At times, more simpler Mass for children with explanations. Homilies need to be concise and clear.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church needs to move forward with heads held high, with dignity and confidence and be led by the Holy Spirit. It needs to put on a suit of armour and continue to stand up for the sacredness of life (beginning and end), the sanctity of marriage and the sacraments, justice and Gospel values, and guidelines for the faithful. Not to water down the Catholic faith and teachings and not pander to those who want to make changes that will weaken the Church. It needs to stop apologising about the abuse and give victims the freedom to let go, be healed and move on with their lives. The Church needs to support the clergy and be vigilant against the evils of false accusations by individuals and organisations like S.N.A.P (Survivors Network of those Abused by priests). The Church needs to include the Prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel at the end of all Masses and evoke the help of Our Lady by saying the Hail Mary. (The battle between good and evil is very real in today's society and everyone needs the armoury and power of prayer to stand up to Satan). Priests should be freed to devote time to the spiritual life of the Church and their own spiritual development and not be distracted by the burdens of running a parish. The business side of the parish could be run by the laity. We need to continually to search for that "New Pentecost in</p>

which will be re-established the victory of truth” (Pope John XXIII). For me, that came about through the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as I have shared in the story of my faith journey below.

I believe God is asking all of us to open ourselves with courage and honesty to listen with the ears of Jesus to the cries of all his people. That our leaders will act with courage and honesty and be a living example of the Gospel. It is my greatest shame that it took a secular people, through the Royal Commission to do what our Church is called to live and act. That our Church will never again face the shame of being forced to take action to hear and act for victims rather than our EGO's (Edging God Out). That we will have the humility and courage to act as the Gospel calls us to do. Jesus would be turning 'trestles' over in the presence of deaf bishops and cardinals who have not heard the cry of victims of abuse in our Church.

The plenary should develop and share with all, a vision for the Church in contemporary society. It needs to be based on Christ's gospel values that bring life and hope to people and shares his mission of bringing mercy, compassion and healing to our world. Consistent with the 'signs of the times', Church structures need to be inclusive, transparent, compassionate and relevant to people and all of creation. Governance issues with the Church need to be reviewed to consider inclusive power sharing, authority, decision-making and transparency. The spiritual formation and education, of various key groups, needs serious consideration and resourcing. This includes: (a) Adult laity generally, (b) Youth (post-secondary school age), (c) school age children—why is our Catholic education system producing so few adult parishioners?, (d) priests (including formation for preaching), (e) Church volunteers in the various parish care and pastoral ministry groups, (f) Families and family life (in all the diverse forms). The Church needs to focus more on helping people discern the will of God in their everyday lives. Further consideration needs to be given to the role of parish life in contemporary society and the provision of opportunities for deeper, more meaningful, social and spiritual connections amongst the faithful. Seminarian formation needs to be more well-rounded and overseas priests need additional enculturation into Australian society and language. Additional support for the poor and marginalized in our society, but also for those disillusioned with the Church, those in broken marriages and those involved with the marriage annulment process. We would like to see a Church that engages more effectively with secular media on social and moral issues (such as euthanasia) in an articulate, informed and educative manner—showing mercy and compassion.

I think God is asking us to remain faithful to his teachings and those of his disciples inspired by the Holy Spirit. To me this means standing firm and not being caught up in the latest fashionable cause of secular society which may or may not have merit. We have the 'Catechism of the Catholic Church' which details what we are obliged to believe as Catholics. To quote Thomas Jefferson "In matters of style swim with the current; in matters of principle stand like a rock".

Healing the wrongs and trauma from past abuse. Truly connecting with everyday people to help them in all manner of difficulty and contemporary issues. Being genuinely inclusive and loving.

We need to pay special attention to ongoing faith formation and 'handing on' the faithful to their next level of faith formation e.g. After primary school aged students have participated on sacramental programs... what next? A teens youth group maybe—how do we hand them on from primary school to a teens group? After a teens group, how do we 'hand them on' to a young adults faith formation group? After young adults, if they are married—what faith formation support do we provide for married couples and young parents? Each step of our life—including retired people, need ongoing faith formation. Each stage can focus on different aspects particular to their life situation. This faith formation should be a collaboration of families, parishes and schools.

God is asking us to stand up and be counted. To stand firm against the homo-heretics that have taken over our Church and turn our faces from Christ. To not allow the heretics that see nothing wrong with encouraging and supporting sodomy, abortion and transgenderism to work at our altars as priests or acolytes or in any capacity. God is telling us stay firm, stay the course, be faithful unto Him.

God is asking the Church to go back to The Holy Bible, back to Scripture, back to the example Jesus shows us and His teaching. The Church, Pope Francis as head must now be radical. By this I truly believe that inclusivity is key. There must be immediate places for training of women Deacons, and training for women priests. I am 60 years old, a traditional Irish Catholic, now an Australian for over 30 years and I want change. It is so clear to me that a balance within the Church is needed. We need men women and married priests. Give priests the choice of marriage. I am almost done with the Church. I go to Sunday Mass but my true love is Scripture, it's me and God/Jesus/Mary and the many others in the Old and New Testament. I am sick to death of the Catholic Patriarchy, the abuse of power and the anti-Christian actions in the global sexual abuse. Satan is very active and it is only with families and movement of women allowing them to rescue the Church that it can become a loving warm safe body of Christ once again. Trust in and building the Catholic Church from its current rotten state may take 50 years. I pray that I will see radical changes happen before I go to God. I hear young people say "I will never send my children to Catholic youth groups or allow them near priests" that is truly distressing for me. If we hear the same old story after the Plenary Council, then I am truly done with Catholicism. Can someone please stand up and make change happen? I am not a feminist. I am a mother and wife. I have had long career in Nursing and now I love my work in Pastoral Care with the aged. Sadly, many have given up on the Church and even Mass. At the moment, I have no trust in my Church. My relationship with God is through Scripture and Prayer. I hope and pray change will take place. Women must be included. After 27 years of being fully committed to my parish Church and seeing that it is the women who fill most of the rosters and partake in most of the ministries in my parish, it is shameful that they cannot be at the very least Acolytes and Deacons. Relinquish the Patriarchal power and the Catholic Church will become the House of God once again where we can stand together in community. Amen.

God wants us to be people who welcome all peoples from every nation and background into Australia, especially those who need protection from persecution. He wants us to know Him more. He wants his little ones to know His wonders.

Live simply, be a grassroots people. Be a Church aligned with the poor and marginalised. Complete overhaul of hierarchical Church. Needs governance structures for all dioceses, priests and religious and Church organisations. Absolute priority is governance around the way of working, leadership styles and pastoral approaches/skills of priests. The message of the Gospel needs to be both lived and communicated. Build community—which is NOT the same as build numbers, build buildings. Downsize ...

To be: • Focused on Jesus, not on the utterances of the Vatican. All those men, dressed up in clerical garb, just for meetings are an outrage to the beauty and simplicity of Jesus's lifestyle and message. Our bishops are, largely, arrogant, right-wing and inaccessible to their brother and sister disciples of Jesus. Tied up in a pomp, bureaucracy and clericalism, they are stifling the Holy Spirit. They do not come across as prayerful people mirroring the Jesus of the Gospels. It is time we were led by women and men who lovingly and authentically serve without the trappings (and "masks") of hierarchy and costume. • Prophetic. In my experience, our priests in their homilies, have forgotten that they need to "open the scriptures" and make them relevant to the issues of society of today—not simply retell what has been read. Our leaders need to challenge injustices and divisive attitudes that demonise groups such as our Aborigines, different races, the divorced, unmarried mothers, LGBTQI persons, the unemployed, refugees, unionists, the elderly, and people forced to live on the street. Our Church needs to be more active at all levels in ensuring the vulnerable get the support they need. • Truthful and deeply sorrowful for its erasure of women from history. Listen to the Spirit, who Jesus promised would "teach us all things". Women are treated as second class across the board and this attitude contributes to large-scale domestic violence and sexual exploitation in society. The Church needs to be prophetic and take the lead in rectifying this sin by allowing women full access to priestly ministry and administrative positions. This recognition of women as full equals would have a flow-on effect in society as well as enriching the Church's ministry, and potentially reducing the risk of sexual abuse of vulnerable children, women and young men. It is both unjust and ridiculous that women who carry,

give birth, nurture and bring up all Catholics, are not permitted equal respect, input and acceptance “at the table” of Catholic ministry, leadership and decision-making. • Truly synodal—at all levels—in both structure and practice. Enough of treating the laity as second-class Catholics. • Contemplative in its prayerfulness. We have a strong contemplative, mystical tradition in the Church; yet most people (bishops and priests included) are still “children” in their reliance on “noisy” forms of vocal prayer, thus preventing a real “being with God” and a listening to the promptings of the Spirit in the silence of our being. • Australian. Stop using culturally African and Asian priests. Ordain Australian women and married people. Take Aboriginal spirituality seriously. Humbly learn what they have to teach. • Evolutionary, not static. The universe, shot through with the loving energy of God, is in a constant state of growth and becoming. So must the Church be. Let the Spirit breathe life instead of trying to stifle it with patriarchal rules and regulations.

We need to be humble and accept the trials our Church is going through and work so hard that we make sure that these atrocities never can happen again in silence and complicity by the Church.

To show Australia the beauty and glory of God. To show others the way to God by our sanctified way of living, by the beauty and reverence of our churches, by the transcendent presence made visible and emphasised in the Eucharist. To hear preaching with "not ... a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love".

We met on Tuesday, 26th February 2019 to share our thoughts on how God is speaking to the Church today. A major theme in our conversation was a need for the Church to return to a more authentic expression of the Gospel. We felt that restoring a broken Church and building trust requires a sincere desire to give more credible and authentic witness to the Gospel. We felt that discernment needs to be given to what Christianity means in 2019 and how people associate with the Gospel teaching. In particular, our conversation centred on a number of key sub-themes that we felt were important for the Church to address going forward. Archdiocesan structures and leadership Archdiocesan structures and leadership need to be reviewed. This includes structures that facilitate the relationship between bishops and the laity of their dioceses. We need to identify and embrace structures and processes that are more open, transparent and collaborative. We had concerns about clericalism and a greater desire to see priests becoming more connected and proactive in the lives of modern families and young people. We felt there was a need for ALL parishes to have parish councils to ensure that the needs of the local community were being heard and addressed at the parish level. The role of women in the Church. We felt a need for the Church to be more open to the role of women in the decision-making processes and decision-making roles within the Church. Also, recognising that women from all different backgrounds need to be included in this process (married, single, religious, divorced, Indigenous, etc.). Concern for our youth. We felt that there is a great need for the Church to meet young people where they are at. For young people to be able to encounter scripture and the Church through THEIR lens.

God is asking us to renew the domestic Church, which is the family. A key element to this is the transmission of faith to children and the role of the faith community as a support to couples. God is asking us to take seriously the call to pass on the faith for the future generations. This requires a serious faith formation of parents, not as a series of lectures, but a continual unfolding of baptismal grace. Perhaps the parish structure, as we have known it in the past, is changing to a more communal and familiar model. And herein lies the call to nourish faith at a family, or domestic level. The relationship between families, schools and parishes has been a subject of much attention in recent years, but we recognise a need for catechesis and an integration of religion and life. Families of today, living in Australia, face a great struggle against secularization, the illusive charm of social media and materialism. We feel that God is calling us to recognize in this an opportunity to grow in our love for Christ and safeguard the deposit of faith that has been entrusted to the Church. At times parents admit that they are not equipped with all the answers or methods to pass faith on to their children. The Church in Australia, therefore, is called to support the domestic Church, the family, by offering services which can help parents grow in faith personally and for the benefit of their children.

<p>Within our family, we gathered to do a listening and dialogue session as a family. My wife and I together with our children and particularly our eldest (17) to the time to reflect on what God is asking of us in Australia today. We've attached our response as a word document to this submission.</p>
<p>I'm currently employed as the [ - ]. I've participated in a few listening and encounter dialogue groups. However, I also wanted to make a personal submission with regard to what I feel God is asking of us in Australia and within the Church at this time. Particularly, in relation to marriage and family life. I've attached it as a word document to this submission.</p>
<p>I believe that God is asking us to be bold and adapt to our times and society. I believe that the teachings of the Catholic Church are important now in the divisive self-serving world in which we live but over the years we have become stale, authoritative and resistant to new ideas and ways of thinking. Jesus himself was quite a visionary and proposed changes to his society that would make our world more inclusive, fairer, just and caring. We as a religion need to make ourselves more relevant to the times in which we live.</p>
<p>To continue people like me to worship in a Faith Community. The Church should revisit the sacrament of Confession; allow married people to be priests; reduce clerical clothing and titles. The Church is owned by the clerical class. The Lay people have little say in the running of the Church. The Church has done wonderful work with the poor and there is always more to do. I am inspired by people like Mother Teresa the Church promote these people a little more. The fact that women cannot become priests is seen as discriminatory. Might the Church look at contraception rules in the light of population growth. The Church should take the best of the past and be willing to change structures and rules in the light of the modern world. The Church needs to look to attracting young people; although some are distracted by the clothing from the middle ages. I know of many young people committing suicide and pray that they can find meaning through the Church.</p>
<p>Four Clear themes were identified: A. To respond to the marginalised as Jesus would in both a political and practical way B. To empower the laity by changing the power structure and hierarchy of the Church C. To improve the role and participation of women in the Church especially in the hierarchy. D. To respond to the 'signs of the times' and move away from fundamentalism and clericalism. The community here believes that God is asking the hierarchy to use this Plenary Council to listen to the people and respond quickly. Further details are: To respond as Christ would to the needs of His Church which is made up primarily of the laity. To 'Renew" by being proactive in responding to the challenges of modern life. To be inclusive and welcoming. To treat ALL people with dignity and integrity. To reach out to those who are currently marginalised from the Church (e.g. youth, Indigenous, LGTB, divorced, abused children, migrants and refugees). To recognise the major role of the laity and in particular lay and religious women in the Church and share all aspects of power with them. To challenge the Church's position on celibacy in priesthood. To change the hierarchical structure of the Church. To respond to what makes us an Australian Church with specific needs and issues.</p>
<p>In the light of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse, falling attendances, humanist societies' overtaking the churches in social and ecological justice, climate change action, the entrenched patriarchy, rankism and imperialist culture of Church hierarchies, management and operations, and relentless unwillingness to listen to people, science and nature, I suggest fully abandoning the Greco-Roman approach to religion and returning to the gospel, life and works of Jesus and beginning over to reinvent a way to live in and harmoniously with all Creation and each other.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be a fully inclusive Church where all are welcomed into the whole Eucharistic celebration. This includes our LGBTQIA friends as well as those with physical, emotional and intellectual disabilities "we are made in the image and likeness of God". God is asking us to invite the laity to play a significant role in the life of the Church and be witnesses of Jesus Christ's love. God is asking us to: update Church practices to make it more appealing to modern society To engage youth in the life of the Church using new and progressive methods that appeal to current and future generations. For example, relevant and engaging music, dance, and homilies that are topical visual</p>

stimulus, active/engaging Masses, etc. To create a Mass specifically catered towards young children in practice and in length. God is asking us to respond to the changing needs of youth and increasingly secular society God is asking us to be good role models on behalf of the Church. God is asking us to reconsider the language, structure and purpose of the Mass in modern contemporary context to connect young people to God and establish relevance in their lives. God wants us to keep kids safe, address sexual assault/abuse and punish those responsible; accept responsibility and be transparent. God wants us to work towards equal leadership opportunities for males and females. Dismantle the current power structure that isolates ordinary people God is asking us to connect to youth, work on tolerance and connectivity. He is asking us to make the Church more relevant to all members of the Church. For people to come back to Church. We think God is asking us to become more relevant to the real-life context currently being experienced by all Australians. God is asking us to be welcoming, inclusive, committed, to be unwavering in our beliefs.

I am really sick of people saying that the Church needs to change. NO. The Church is NOT the problem. Effeminacy in the priesthood and in the pews is the problem. Effeminacy has nothing to do with masculinity or femininity; it is instead the vice of 'softness'. It affects both men and women. It is an aversion to anything even remotely unpleasant, most especially any sort of exertion or voluntary suffering i.e. shunning responsibility, maintaining a need for human respect, a refusal to take on any hardship or discomfort, refusing to act or charitably instruct others, refusing to speak up so as to avoid condemnation or criticism. God is asking everyone in the Church in Australia to gird themselves with courage and speak the truth. Not truth based on any humanly derived logic but based on the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the doctrinal traditions of the Church. This truth needs to be spoken from the pulpit and in everyday conversation (at home, at work, while socialising). Forget popularity. Forget Church attendance figures. With heaven or hell as the only two long term eternal options for every soul, the choice to speak about God's truths should not be difficult (pre-marital sex is abhorrent, oral sex is abhorrent, abortion IS abhorrent, homosexual acts are abhorrent, gender identity is NOT based on an individual's subjective reality). Unfortunately, one of Satan's best tricks seems to be, that protecting someone's feelings from the truth is an actual basis on which to build an edifice. It is foolhardy and contrary to true charity. Increasingly, we live in a society which dictates that freedom is doing exactly whatever one wants. This type of thinking is extraordinarily pernicious because, in this paradigm, not only is every individual free to create their own false reality, but it simultaneously produces a concomitant expectation and demand by the individual for every other human being to adopt their false reality as being legitimate. This is leading to chaos and persecution of anyone who does not agree. And how did society get to the point of legalising abortion right up to birth (New York state, 2019), promoting infanticide (USA, 2019), recognising same sex marriage, approving of all manner of perversions? The answer is that when the initial seeds were sown, it was not effectively opposed. Why not? In a word, effeminacy. From a Catholic apologist, "Effeminacy simply cannot be reconciled to Christianity. It is contrary to the very foundations and core of the Truth of Christ." All of the serious filth and evil in the world is growing exponentially. However, none of this will change one iota until our priests and bishops grow some balls, man up, and start to speak the truth courageously. God wants the Church in Australia to teach and maintain that, as God's creatures, we are NOT free from all moral constraints. We are NOT free to determine our own subjective reality based on whatever criteria we wish to accept or deny.

Jesus is asking us to 'put out into the deep' just as He said to Peter (Luke 5:4-6) even though nothing was caught before. The difference now is that Jesus is in the boat and what was impossible before is possible now. We are to recognise the presence of God in our midst and cooperate with grace, permitting Him to fill our boats.

God asks us to have a leadership structure in the Church which is suitable to our time. He asks us to walk together and so a synodal spirituality requires synodal structures (parish, deanery, diocesan and national pastoral councils) at every level. The presence of lay men and especially women is vital. Given the way Church employees are clericalised there, God asks us to be open to genuinely diverse viewpoints and not to exclude anyone. God asks us to move beyond the Tridentine model of

<p>ordained ministry to a ministry more clearly a ministry of service. We need to move from maintenance of the present failing Church to an inclusive sense of discipleship and mission sustained and energised by a faith encounter with God.</p>
<p>Leadership: Clarity of thought: (Rational argument is not at the forefront of dealing with issues and problems faced by Australians—very clearly a very vocal minority pushes populist views without regard to rigorous intellectual scrutiny. I believe the Church should present a strong voice with arguments).</p> <p>Advocacy for those who are not heard: (the Church over history has been strong in advocacy for Education, Health and Shelter for the less fortunate—this should continue to be a strength and source of pride).</p> <p>Advocate truth and justice for all—(transparency is a vital component of this—show leadership in this regard by both demonstrating transparency and also demanding transparency).</p>
<p>God is asking us to return to the 'Truth' as Jesus taught it. The Catholic Church has failed in recent years to teach basic truths. People no longer know the mortal sins of contraception, fornication, euthanasia, abortion, pornography, masturbation, homosexual sex, idolatry and the reception of the 'blessed Eucharist' in an unworthy state, and that these sins lead to hell. There is rarely any mention of Hell, the need for repentance or the gravity of accepting 'Same sex marriage'. Priests and leaders in our Church rarely speak about the dangers to our souls of these sins in a bid to remain popular or politically correct. Matt 16:26 Will you gain anything if you win the whole world but lose your life? Of course not! There is nothing you can give to regain your life. There is however much mention of doing good works by focusing on material gain and saving the environment, the latter which in itself cannot save your soul. The Church the world over has embraced the secular world and its priorities, which nearly all offend God and condemn those who embrace it. We are also hearing much talk about 'mercy', but not the kind that Jesus offered, which requires repentance and a firm purpose of amendment. The other kind which merely embraces and welcomes all, without repentance and change brings with it only condemnation. The word of God is 'Sacrosanct', it stands for all time and ages, and to adapt or change it is to say you are above God. I find this Plenary Council very troubling given that 'all people' are given the opportunity to convey their thoughts, whether they have faith or practice it, or even any knowledge of the 'truth'. Why are we joining with unbelievers and allowing them to alter Gods word? 2 Corinthians 6:14 "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common?" It is imperative that the Catholic Church in this country return to the true core of Jesus' mission, that being the salvation of souls through teaching the commandments, absolute morals and repentance, and cease appeasing the secular world and political correctness so that souls will not perish.</p>
<p>To be there for each other, to work together, help each other, believe in Jesus, Mary and all the saints.</p>
<p>The majority of Catholics are not well formed, so how can we properly discern what God is asking. We need to trust in the Church that Jesus started and the teachings that have been passed down through the ages. Teachings have been watered down and Moral issues are not even taught anymore. Unless we go back to the basics and teach the truth, more and more souls will be in danger.</p> <p>Stricter screening for priestly vocations in order to weed out the problem with men with same sex attraction and sexual abuse.</p>
<p>To respond to the Gospel call: to stand alongside the poor and the powerless; to ensure that women are treated equally; to eliminate unjust and unwarranted discrimination that is founded in prejudice. To ensure that women are at every level of Church leadership: including as ordained priests. That the next Australian Cardinal is a woman with demonstrable compassion and empathy as well as theological training. That intelligent women leaders with self-evident profound spirituality and empathy are elevated to lead our Australian Church community. That lay people, responsive to the call of the Gospel and to the Christian community and the wider Australian community, are</p>

incorporated into the leadership of the Australian hierarchical Church. There should be no more Church meetings anywhere in Australia that are exclusively male; no closed meetings where an exclusively male clerical episcopacy and priesthood meet without the presence of the laity and in particular the presence of women at the front and centre of these gatherings; and involved as leaders and spokespersons for these gatherings. The Holy Spirit is self-evident in the contribution on offer from women and the Church community is robbed of their full contribution unless these steps are taken urgently.

The Church stands at an inflection point. It is its Kairos moment. This moment crystallises around the scandal of institutional child sexual abuse and the Church's response to that. We can resist the movement of Spirit, by being defensive or gripping on to the tragedy of it, or we can allow the movement of Spirit. Out of bad things good things come. That is the Gospel. The Church in Australia has one great advantage, it is in Australia. We must open ourselves to the Spirit of the land and to Aboriginal spirituality, before it is too late. That is the task that we must accomplish for the sake of the whole of Australia. It will be our gift to the whole of the Church.

To adapt to a changing society without losing our Christian values. To engage the young people and make them see the Church as something they want to be a part of. We could take a look at the way some of the other churches (Hillsong for example) engage their youth. Focus more on the loving God instead of the disapproving God.

Be grateful for all His graces and blessings. Like the Church down the ages, the Church in Australia has had her challenges. However, that should not allow us to alter or diminish our message from our message is one of hope, faith and love. God is asking us to continue our living and loving relationship with Him. God would like us to share the good news with all without fear or favour.

God is asking us to go back to our traditional roots and not continue down the path of modernism and progressive extremism. We need to stop trying to change things within the Church unless it means reverting to how it once was before all of the problems arose after Vatican II. We need to stick with priests being celibate as it is a traditional going way back and not be forced to drive us further towards Protestantism with priests marrying, not only will there be financial burdens but more importantly they don't have the time to have a family and also serve God in the tight schedule and hard work load that they are given. If we are wondering why vocations aren't happening, look to why there are many in the traditionalist Catholic Churches that celebrate Latin Mass and why the Novus Ordo ones are struggling. We must not allow divorcees to receive Communion no matter what progressives in the Church say as it is a direct undermining of our faith. We must not bow to political correctness and accept the LGBT agenda as it is a mocking of our faith. We need to be more political and get the Church to once again have influence on society and become more powerful in the decision-making. We need to ensure Catholic schools are teaching the faith just like they used to rather than pushing these matters aside and becoming no better than public schools. We need to ensure that every diocese in this country has a Latin Mass available as it promotes the traditional core of the faith and every parishioner should have that option to attend such a Mass, at the moment there are 3 diocese that don't have it available, [ - ] being one of them and for one of the biggest cities in the country to not have one is a disgrace. We must go back to traditional hymns rather than turn into a charismatic Hillsong style church, there is already those types of churches available and whilst some may think they are thriving they are not, because people come and go and don't stay on full term, it also undermines our faith in trying to be like them although we aren't. As a young person, I reject guitars and all forms of modern worship and much prefer Gregorian chanting and traditional hymns. Church numbers started to decline when the modern reforms of Vatican II came about and it hasn't recovered since. If you are wondering why our numbers are down and vocations are down, that is the one event plus the further modernisation overtime that has made people lose the faith. We must be strong and adhere to all forms of tradition whether it be regarding liturgy, social views, etc. I also believe that the modern architecture of the newer churches are a disgrace and look no different to modern Pentecostal halls. Also, we need to get rid of gay priests as they have been the ones that have brought about the molestation issues. Sacred silence in Mass and

modesty should be enforced also. Bring back headscarfs and no female speakers, or altar servers. We need to start living our faith.

To be courageous and dare great things. Use resources to have a Service Corps (like Peace Corps) with staff to organise, audit, manage diverse service projects linking experienced people with skills to those in need—e.g. senior citizens, young students, solo parents, refugees, graduate school students in their gap year doing service overseas (Timor) or immersion community work with not-for-profit organisations, street people support and lots more. Empower laity—many with theology degrees—to various ministries including sharing the gospel/homilies, anointing of sick. Form councils of lay people to take ownership of their parishes and to direct outreach. Consider ministries for women, married men, and former priests. Consider using previous language of the Mass—has been a real decline in meaning with “new Roman Missal” a poor decision. Make celibacy for priesthood a choice, and involve more laity and especially women in the training of priests in seminaries. Provide more educational opportunities to update and refresh understanding and provide different perspectives for teachers, congregations, and priests and religious—focused on quality adult education.

I believe God is asking for a greater spiritual equality between men and women in the Church: for example, women being able to become Deacons. I think God is asking for a less Patriarchal Church, one where leadership is shared by female bishops and Archbishops or by removing the hierarchy completely and sharing the load between women and men. I think God is asking us to focus on Jesus' sandals in the dust as he moves along the many roads he walked rather than the rich iconic fashion attire for bishops and Archbishops and I believe our Pope has responded to this need in the small but big ways he has rejected red shoes, luxury cars and grand apartments. I think God is asking Pope Francis to rebuild His Church, as he asked St Francis too. To join men with women in tasks together; to take the pompous attire of bishops away and send them out with their sisters in Christ into the streets to love His people. To create a more humane Church: for example, to allow priests to marry, to have female pastoral consultants and Deacons sharing their load; to share the Holy Words set apart for the ceremony of male Deacons with women disciples who have given their lives to Jesus too. The Church is so male orientated and I think God is asking us to change this and giving us absolute reasons too: the sexual abuse of minors across the globe by priests and the reported infiltration of homosexuality into the Vatican can be changed with an equal ratio of women serving Our Lord and the Pope in newly greeted roles of equality; giving women and laity renewed options to serve alongside their brothers. I think God is asking for his Church and especially priests to be more pastoral, for the Church to teach them how to respond to sexual abuse without fear; for the Church to lead the way in dealing with sexual abuse in secular community as well: for the illumination of the Royal Commission into sexual abuse in institutions to reach out to community as well.

I think God is asking us to be a Church that is more concerned with the well-being of people than with an unhealthy attachment to a sense of self. We strive so ardently to get people to return to the Church and yet there are so many priests who are not welcoming or who just don't really care about parishioners (this is a reality lived out in many parishes throughout the country). I feel there needs to be more work on development of priests in the seminary and especially for priests coming in from foreign countries. I know at one level, it is crucial that we have priests who can celebrate Mass for us, but the mere functionality of priesthood, in today's world, is not enough. People in the pews want to be cared for pastorally and we have a knowledge of our faith which is deeply rooted in the scriptures. If priests are not prepared to put effort into their homilies, then they fail in their mission to nourish the flock entrusted to their care. I accept that there are many truly wonderful and committed priests in our country, but they are too thin on the ground and are outnumbered by the multitude who have grown comfortable in the presbyteries! At this time in our history, our Church is crying out for humble servants who are genuinely disciples of Christ, who can minister to the flock, not just because it's their job, but because they really want to serve God's people. In this age when the Church has become suspect due to priests and others abusing innocent children, we need to

present the true face of Christ to the world. Not the faded image that remains despite the lack of zeal in the clergy, but the Christ of the Gospels ... the Christ who is present par excellence in the Eucharist. Catholics love their faith and their priests, but this fidelity is being sorely tested as we stack one crisis on top of another, one sin on top of another, to the point that many just give up and walk away. What is our response to them? How do we dare encourage them to come back? And, to what do we ask them to return? I pray with all my heart that the Leaders of our Church in Australia will be courageous enough to address these matters with great sincerity and work without ceasing to transform the tarnished reputation of our Church for which they are largely responsible. This is no time to be hiding behind excuses or to defray the level of responsibility. Our Church is in a sorry state because of what our Cardinals, Archbishops and bishops have both done and failed to do. The responsibility for our current circumstance lies squarely at their feet and now is the time for them to respond accordingly. The Church has faced many tests during our long history and many of the scandals were washed away by the sheer goodness of those men and women who stood up to be counted. They stood up as the presence of Christ, in the face of Massive opposition and Christ prevailed through them. Let us pray that the Lord raise up men and women through who he will prevail yet again!

God's purpose since the beginning of time has been to communicate with humanity the message of love, compassion and forgiveness. The Church has helped people to experience that message for thousands of years. Unfortunately, the Church is no longer the face of love, forgiveness and compassion for many thousands of Australians due largely to the Child Sexual abuse scandal but also because it continues to hold on to a culture which is completely out of touch with the reality of people's lives. So long as the Church constructs its leadership and decision-making on a model of clerical power which denies the full participation of lay people, particularly women, it will fail to be the fullness of Christ's revelation. The Church needs to be committed first and foremost to building Christian Communities reaching out to those in need, standing with the poor and oppressed against injustice, speaking out on their behalf and challenging all Christians to identify with the needs of others, particularly the poor. The Church in Australia has become inward-looking, concerned primarily with sacramental life and administration rather than its missionary purpose of bringing the good news of the gospel to Australian people. This requires a complete revolution in the Church, returning to its roots, which were planted deeply in Jesus life and teaching. Many Australian people, especially young people, see the Church as an outdated, rigid, hierarchical structure, more intent on preserving itself than responding to the hurt and suffering of the people it claims to serve. Jesus message of sacrificial love as the source and summit of ultimate happiness has so much to offer Australian society, caught in the meaningless pursuit of materialism and hedonism. The Church is failing to communicate this message because its very structures alienate the people who most need the message.

Asking people to frequent the sacraments more often, especially the Eucharist. Asking for more reverent Eucharist celebrations, especially the more reverent hymns, a shift away for Hillsong type hymns, Mass on Mondays, Family gatherings and support for couples bringing up children. The laity need to understand their role as evangelists in the middle of the world. To move away from the Protestant type of evangelist and be more normal. Better formation of catechists. Make clear the teachings of the Church on IVF and contraceptives. Catholic schools should be Catholic where most of the teachers practice their faith. Better seminary formation for priests.

I think that maybe it is time to update the Church to the modern times so that it can appeal to people of this day and age. With the press hounding every step that the Church takes, it needs to be seen to be open and updated. I come from an Anglican background and have been a Catholic since 2010 and I cannot understand why priests cannot live a family life as well as serve their community as many other religions manage to do. You could say that RC priests give more time to their parishioners but having belonged to the High Anglican Church, I cannot see that their priests served the parish any less and I feel that he would be more capable to help parishioners with marriage queries. I also believe that this could help towards stamping out some of the terrible press that the

Church has received. We all know that abuse happens all sections of the society but the presence of unmarried men with people leaves them open to be untrue to their faith and also more open to be criticized. We see priests who are married come over to the RC Church and this can only be seen as unfair and unequal. I believe that if marriage was a possibility we might see more young men think about the priesthood and still be very good at their vocation. I know a Deacon who is brilliant at dealing with the congregation and giving a homily and I cannot think that he is one person who would have been so good as a priest but because he chose marriage the RC Church missed out on a very good priest. This would then lead me into wanting to see more Australian priests at the pulpit and I wonder if they could be married if we might see a few more. At the moment we have seen a movement of priests and in the northern suburbs of [ - ]. There are no Australian priests and unfortunately, the English of the priests that are in this zone is not very good. I am finding it very hard to attend Mass at the moment as I cannot understand the priest that we have been allocated and although a very lovely man and I believe intelligent—I cannot understand enough of the homily or the service that I think I am wasting my time attending Mass. I know the importance is the Eucharist and it can be done in any language but I also want to learn and be nourished and this is not happening—so much so that I am starting to look around for another church where this nourishing will happen. To be a Catholic church I would be looking at [ - ] or [ - ] and they are both quite a distance away. I feel guilty feeling this way and my faith is battling at this moment in time. The Church decided to give Mass in the local language so that people could understand but to tell you the truth it may as well be in Latin at the moment.

I would like to offer my reflection that God is asking the Church in Australia to renew its identity as a pilgrim people of God, and in doing so, be prepared to forgo a degree of institutional privilege, and be open real possibilities of lay leadership. My discernment has led me to believe that God's call to re-birthing our ecclesial identity in Australia, calls us to honour our heritage, tradition and sense of local church identities across Australia, but to be bold in naming our future as one that fosters genuine co-responsibility. Our call I feel is to renew our baptismal identities, and in doing so come to a deepening awareness of the complementarity of each of our vocational states (Ordained, professed/concreted, married or single), and the identity of each local Church at the level of parish. It is from a renewal and reclaiming of the gifts of our baptismal identities, that we may come to discern together where we wish to journey from there.

I believe the God is asking us to take a deep breath and have a good hard look at where we are going and what image we, as Catholics are portraying to the world. While we are experiencing issues with priests at the moment, we need to also focus at the number of priests in the Church, or lack of numbers. It is very important that lay Catholics contribute and serve in the Church as much as possible. Do we need to look at priests and marriage? Will this increase numbers? I think it will.

To get back to living like Jesus. For the Church and those within it to have a real honest humility, both in truth and to be seen to be a humble organization by the wider community. We need to portray that all of us within the Church are sinners, just like everyone else. Also the Church and Jesus to be, and be seen to be, the greatest source of joy in the world.

A few people from the 8 o'clock Mass congregation at [ - ] Church [ - ] met to discuss and reflect on the question from the Plenary Council: "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" Those present were asked to write their own thoughts on post-it notes and they were put into the mix. A common theme appeared; we had all mentioned the same thing:

We need to build a sense of community. • Build community • Create a sense of community in the parish e.g. family groups • To go back to the Church that Jesus began—inclusion, community, the people of God are the Church. • Promote a sense of community. Listening to people's needs—bottom up, not top down. True sense of Spirituality. • To encourage all to be part of the people of God. • To give the Church back to the people. • To promote the essence of the Gospel. • Emphasis on being a relational Church. • Be actively involved. Ensure the vibe of the parish Council • Less emphasis on power and more on collaborative effort. • Create pathways for the congregation. • Learn to delegate, not to dump.

<p>Other issues that were raised:</p> <p><b>FORGIVENESS</b> Bring back those who were excommunicated. Treat divorce and remarriage sympathetically. Look for God outside the Church building. Facilitate marriage for those who wish to be married in other venues e.g. Outdoors, in a park.</p> <p><b>THE CLERGY</b> Avoid clericalism. Allow priests to live as normal people and marry if they choose. Address the dress code of priests, bishops, cardinals. Currently it is authoritarian and archaic, generating a sense of power and divisiveness. Train priests to be sacramental Ministers, not administrators. Overseas priests must be given ample training in Australian culture and ways of living. Language skills of overseas priests need serious attention before they are inflicted on the parish people.</p> <p><b>EQUALITY FOR WOMEN IN THE CHURCH</b> Women make up the majority of the Congregation but are delegated minor or often menial roles. Give women greater roles in the Church as priests, acolytes or wives of priests. All women to have control over their fertility and therefore their lives using whatever means they choose. Improve the language used to refer to women e.g. the use of the word “virgin”. This word judges the worth of a woman and her character in terms of her purity and virtue. It has been used as a control measure. Men are not judged in this way.</p>
<p>I'm starting with the understanding that God is love and God is truth. And we are all—churched or not—God's people. I find it hard to answer the question here but I think of our two children. When they hear the priest on Sunday, when they see what our community is doing, do they see God's love and God's truth? Do they see the people of God? I am concerned that too often we've not been the visible expression of God's love. We've not expressed the full truth and witness of good people. I'm thinking particularly of women, and laity. We've been a shadow of the people of God and still need to open to all who need us.</p>
<p>Stop being hypocrites—live a transparent ethical life!</p>
<p>God is asking us to live in the world and not be of the world. To live according to the ten commandments and the beatitudes. Love our neighbour as ourselves. Learn about our faith. Read the Bible and study the Bible. Learn about our faith using the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Understand the richness of our faith and what is truth and revealed truth. Understand the importance of the sacraments. Teach our children the wonder and awe of our faith. Face up to our failings as laity not being faithful to the Magisterium of the Church and as priests be bold enough to face the evils such as abortion, contraception, cohabitation. Priests to get amongst the laity and pray with us. Priests should be priest, ministering to the laity and not becoming administrators and psychologist. GK Chesterton was scathing of the introduction of psychology where we excuse everything. Confession/Reconciliation should be readily available. There is no better way to get to know your parishioners than spending time with them during their journey of faith one-on-one in the confessional.</p>
<p>To ordain married people for the task of sacramental roles. To include a gender balanced in all governance from parish to the Vatican.</p>
<p>What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time is the question being asked of the Plenary Council 2020. The answer that we as a family unanimously agree upon is very simple “This is my Son, the Beloved; He enjoys my favour. LISTEN TO HIM. Matthew 17: 5:6. “Do whatever he tells you” John 2: 5:6. Do we need a Council to decide on what our Lord has already taught and left us? (The Bible and his Church) Is the Plenary Council a vehicle to bring us in step with the agenda of a world that rejects and ridicules our Catholic faith and tradition and impose the will of the vocal minority? The Spirit is saying “Jesus Christ is the same today as he was yesterday and as He will be for ever”. Hebrews 13:8:9 Prayer, Eucharistic adoration and Bible understanding is what the Spirit is asking for today and what is sadly ignored by the faithful.</p>
<p>1. That we change the model of the Church from one based on a culture of clericalism, with a clerical hierarchy as a controlling elite, to one centred on the People of God, where all the baptised, lay and ordained, share in the mission of a pilgrim Church. 2. Just as the Church is not the Church of the ordained but of all the baptised, so the ordained priesthood must rediscover its true identity and</p>

mission within the context of the universal priesthood of all the baptised faithful. 3. That the laity be empowered to assume their true and full role in the Church's mission as outlined by Vatican II, not the 'token' one of the past and present. 4. That women's voices be heard and their expertise be utilised at all levels and in all areas of the Church's life and mission.

God wants Australia to return to Him To show our love for Him by us being committed to our faith and not watering it down to suit society or our conveniences... Our priests need to be formed very well only then can they in turn form others. Our priests need to attend formation that is deeply rooted in the Catholic faith. Christ needs to be the front and centre of all decisions and behaviours. We are one body in Christ and all on the journey to heaven. Our priests should not lose their focus of educating and saving souls. Our priests have such a golden opportunity to preach the faithful during Mass in the homily. They need to prepare very well, read sound doctrine to gain help in preparing their sermon. Impart Christ's message and teaching and not waffle on, on random topics that are not relevant. The way they say Mass, shows how holy the priest is. They are in person of Christ at the altar, so they need to be Christ like in simplicity and humility. We remember what Christ did, like when at the washing of the feet, he had women friends, but he chose 12 men and washed their feet. So on Holy Thursday, in our Churches, because we are remembering what Christ did, there should be 12 MEN AND NOT WOMEN on the altar. Our Catholic schools should be united to the Church and its teaching. The teachers teaching religion, should be teaching the Catholic doctrine and not what they think or believe and definitely not their watered-down faith. The catechists too need to form the children receiving the sacraments on the Church doctrine. Our choirs are meant to help the congregation to pray. So the hymns sung should be so and not be distractive and entertaining as a band present in Church. A worst criminal will wear a suit to go to the court. But when one is coming to meet the King of all Kings, they dress down, which is accepted in our churches. The sense of modesty is gone. People need to be educated on the dress code when coming to church. Our code of conduct in the church too has diminished. There is no reverence when genuflecting, no time spent in prayer preparing for Mass, no time spent in thanksgiving after communion and Mass. Reverence during Mass needs to be taught. The sacrament of the sick is being misused. People who are fit, healthy, young, and ignorant—all walk up to be anointed. They are abusing the sacrament. Priests too are allowing this to happen. People need to be educated that it is only for those who are grievously sick, at the point of death are to receive. Confession and Holy Communion are the greatest source of healing. We need to be strong in our faith in this time of adversity. We should be faithful to our vocation keeping our Beloved Mother Mary at our side and with our focus on Heaven. It is only then will Australia and the Catholic Church on the whole, be the Church Christ founded on Peter the rock.

I believe that God is asking of us in Australia that we, the Holy Catholic Church, stand out as a beacon to the rest of the nation and the world. We of this time in history are arrogant enough to think that we are somehow of a 'modern' time and a part of a completely 'new' way of life. We think that the Church must somehow 'change' and 'conform' and 'become more relevant' to our time, when in fact, the opposite is true. What the people are yearning for, deeply crying out for in their souls, is the Truth; the uncompromised Truth. The watering down across the board since Vatican II has done nothing but weaken the Church and disguise the Truth, so it has become so much harder for the younger generations to discover and understand. The Church in her deep beauty and wisdom has evangelised the West through 2000 years of history that has only declined with the onset of this belief that we somehow live in a more 'modern', 'sophisticated' world, which the Church must somehow change and reform in order to conform. In fact, the reform the Church truly needs is to be a return to the beauty of tradition and unswerving, courageous commitment to the Truth, so the Church can truly fulfil her mission to be a light to the world in darkness. It will not be in encouraging 'full, conscious, active participation' in the liturgy through giving more and more roles and positions within the liturgy to men, women and children. It will be a return to the Sacred and the Holy in the liturgy. It will be a return to deep reverence in the liturgy. It will be a Sign to our times that God's Holy Church will not bend down, kow-tow to or worship the Idols of the confused, secular thought

processes of our age: individualism, feminism, modernism, 'tolerance', relativism. Holy Mother Church, in her deep and beautiful traditions, in her reverence for the sacred, in her uncompromising respect for a timeless God, has survived the fall of the Roman Empire, the French Revolution, the Communist Revolution, wars and world wars. It is only the Sexual Revolution of this age that threatens to topple the Church as we have always known her, and it will only be a return to the uncompromising commitment to the truth and the upholding of Holy Mother Church's traditions and deep respect of the sacred, that we will stand tall and strong in the crisis of these times. It is only this way that we will shine out in the darkness. Do away with conformity to the secular demands of our age. Hold fast to the traditions that were given us. It is not through bending the knee to this evil culture that we will survive and thrive. It is this that will destroy us. May God help us and his Holy Church in this great South Land; may we rise again and have courage once more. The world so badly needs it. And we the Church, so badly need us. Do not fail us or the world.

I think he is asking us to pray for peace, the underprivileged, and the refugees. To be more charitable to our fellow human beings.

Please see file attachment from the Listening and Dialogue session conducted with the 257 Pre-Kindergarten—Year 12 Teaching staff, non-teaching staff, support staff and Senior Leadership Team from [ - ] College, [ - ].

I think God is asking the people of Australia at this time to return to the truths of the Catholic faith—the Church as founded by Jesus Christ Himself. I think people are 'hungry', craving for the truth and have been 'starved' of apologetics in order to appease the masses and not to offend sensibilities. It would seem the truths of our faith have been watered down in a misguided effort to be 'politically correct'. Catholics need to be taught the truths of their faith in order to be rooted in the Church, to have their souls fed—quite simply, to understand so as to return for more. For example, jokes and general 'feel good' stories delivered as sermons are not educating people. God is asking for the Catholics of Australia to be catechised in order to convert others, particularly lapsed family members and friends. Jesus didn't ask the people about what they would like to or wanted to hear—He spoke the truth and did not adapt it to keep people happy so that they would continue to follow Him. It was not a numbers game, rather one of, 'Truth or Dare'. The principal of my children's Catholic high school asked what 'apologetics' meant when my husband and myself asked if it was being taught to students in Religion. Our Catholic school educated nephews and nieces have all recently had garden weddings—the Catholic Church is irrelevant in their lives. Evangelisation is needed to revive the floundering faith, especially that of the young. There is no definitive outcry against euthanasia, abortion, same-sex marriage, gender fluidity, etc. from youth in a secular society dominated by social media. Catholic viewpoints are also seemingly in the minority. Catholics in Australia are being challenged in their beliefs and lack an ability to defend the faith when confronted by persecution, media or otherwise. God is asking us to be ready and armed for secular warfare. Again, education is the key—understanding the reasons, the 'why' of our faith. We need to stand for something or else we stand for nothing. As a Catholic primary school teacher and parent, a critical element of this would be to employ dedicated, enthusiastic and learned teachers of our precious faith—practising Catholics who are passionate about imparting and sharing our beliefs. Most of our teachers are Catholic in name only (for example it had to be pointed out to them they had to fast 1 hour before attending Mass as they downed their coffee and biscuits before walking into a school Mass—they honestly didn't know something so fundamental as this) and so it is no surprise our students have not embraced the faith from being at school, even though they are a 'captive' audience.

God is asking us to reform the Church. Priests should primarily be recruited amongst older married men, whose children are adults. Vows of celibacy have clearly failed. We also need to acknowledge that Anglo-Saxon Australians have abandoned the Church because of the paedophilia scandals. More and more parishes are made up of racial minorities. Yet, the leadership of the Church and Catholic schools are still Anglo-Saxon. So the leadership no longer represents the flock. In this vein, in Catholic schools are no longer Catholic at all. Even Principals no longer go to Church. Yet non-white Catholics cannot find teaching Jobs in Catholic schools. So somewhere along the way, Catholic

became code for white. Catholic parents have figured this out and have begun to abandon Catholic schools. There are less than five percent of actual Catholics in Catholic schools. Less than five staff per school are practicing, church-going Catholics. We must make Catholic schools authentically Catholic. Hire practicing Catholics. Would you believe that Catholic Education has no Diversity Policy. Even Public Education has one. Considering the sins that the Church committed against people of colour, that is appalling. We need to fix Catholic Education before it becomes irrelevant.

God is asking us to be a more inclusive Church and a Church for the poor. The laity and particularly women should be involved in all areas of Church governance. The institutional child sexual abuse scandal has forever changed our Church. Parishes are closing or amalgamating because of a lack of priests. It is time to re-imagine our concept of "Church". Priest offending was lowest in the Archdiocese of Adelaide during the term of Archbishop Faulkner. The model of governance used at that time should be the starting point for reform. We need to hear the voices of the laity speaking from the altar. Women want to contribute their gifts to the Church. The laity can help priests in the administration of our parishes, in the liturgy and in the sacramental life of the Church. Our Church needs to be a Church of action. To speak out more forcefully in support of people on the margins and provide support for them also. Our society has never before been so financially unequal. Anxiety and loneliness are increasing. Our Church needs to be a haven for the lonely, the poor, and all who need support. It needs to be a strong advocate for the dignity of all in our workplaces, in our schools and hospitals and in the provision of adequate safety nets, shelter and support for the vulnerable. The Church should be a leader in advocating for the environment as environmental degradation will affect the poor to a greater degree. A Church of action can be achieved through the support of the laity. Laity and clergy need to work together to form a new way of being Church.

God is asking us to remove the barnacles from the barque of Peter and return to the essential gospel values in matters of relationships, liturgy, priesthood, equality of men and women, accountability and transparency. (See attached for further details)

Being an older, single person living on my own, and having to lose one of my parents recently, the one and only thing that had occurred to me recently. I believe God wants from me is to be in a relationship with Him and one another. I personally feel the consequence of being alone as God has made it clear it is not good for man to be alone. My question is, are we looking after the older single people, or anyone in that matter, that are lonely for some reason? I heard a while ago there are many lonely people out there.

I think most of the faithful need serious catechesis, to know the Catholic doctrine, to know in greater depth the fundamentals of faith. Both for themselves and to help friends understand the faith. Few realize they don't know their faith ... (feelings are not enough as the media, etc. can easily sway that.) so they will not do anything to study their faith. A way has to be found to form the faithful almost without effort on their part, perhaps the first 5mins of Sunday homily could be used to give some doctrinal input in a structured way so that good foundations are slowly built. Doctrine at adult level, not primary school (the rest of the homily can be on the readings, as usual). Without solid doctrinal foundation it is so hard to stay faithful, one just builds on feelings and keeping everyone around happy. Faith needs to be built on Truth, not feelings.

I believe that the Australian Church should be more of a missionary Church—to be in mission for others, to reach out more to the marginalised, homeless, refugees, the sick, Indigenous communities. Secondly, there needs to be a greater role of women and laity within the structure of the Church. Thirdly, the youth is the future of the Church and they need to be heard and be involved and engaged in parish and community life. Fourthly, priests should have optional celibacy. They need to have greater support mentally, emotionally and intellectually from the archdiocese. Most importantly, both religious and lay clericalism needs to be eradicated as it is the cause of the sexual abuse issues the whole Catholic Church is facing worldwide. It will take generations to eradicate both types of clericalism but it needs to start now with educating the laity and educating families and young children especially. Education for priests needs to be out of the seminaries and they need to be integrated in the society taught by male and female lay and religious teachers. Women should

also be ordained. Lastly, there needs to be transparency, accountability, open-handed inclusivity within our Church to avoid a repeat of the current crisis the worldwide Church is facing.

I think God is asking us to move forward positively and with faith into the future and to stop knocking our Church and religious personnel. There will always be a few individuals who will step out of line and people in authority who may not take action to bring those people to account or to ensure that those actions are not repeated, but we should celebrate the other 99% who have done a marvellous job over the last couple of centuries in educating, nursing and caring for thousands of young, old and vulnerable people. Our priests and bishops and the Pope must also stick to matters of faith and morals and avoid being drawn into political and scientific issues that will elicit support from 50% and opposition from the other 50% of our people and the public in general, e.g., climate change policies and the 230 year old question of British settlement of Australia—recently we had a supply priest at [ - ] talking a lot of mindless claptrap about how we invaded and took over the land owned by the Aborigines 230 yrs ago (without any positive reference to how they and we have benefitted from the building of roads , bridges , ports , schools , hospitals , churches , houses, etc. and the introduction of agricultural practices, crops and livestock to feed the masses, etc.). We, the current population, are not responsible for anything that happened 200 yrs ago, but we are responsible for introducing our Aboriginal friends to the destructive influences of drugs and alcohol and to reliance on the welfare state. We are also not responsible for the sins of religious people who, along with lay people and clergy from other churches and people in authority in govt and non-govt organisations , have preyed on vulnerable children and others in their care—we need to do what we can to stamp out these activities (where there is corroborated evidence of wrong-doing )—but we shouldn't allow ourselves to be misled by arguments about the role of celibacy in these matters—those who have committed offences have a free will like the rest of us , and if they no longer wish to abide by their vows of chastity, then they should leave the religious life, rather than use that to argue for an end to celibacy or to support the wide introduction of married priests or women priests. We should also, as a matter of urgency, introduce in our so-called “Catholic” schools, the study of apologetics, so that our present and past students can speak strongly and effectively about their faith and its teachings in the public arena. Along with this, we must work to strengthen the Catholic ethos in our schools by ensuring a higher proportion of practising Catholic students, parents and teachers who support the teachings of the Church in our schools. We must also try to increase the numbers of Australian priests in our parishes—while we are grateful for the contribution of overseas priests, many are very hard to understand and this turns people off.

A Humble Church I feel God is asking of Australia at this time for humility in the Church. The Australian Catholic Church has too strong a history of arrogance. This is manifested in the responses of the Church leaders to almost anything from the laity. The Church has done the research and so it has all the answers and if a member of the laity asks a question the response comes in terms of right and wrong. This is especially true in matters where the laity have an issue with a parish priest. The laity will never win, because the parish priest is the parish priest and he can do what he wants. Extrapolating on the last point, the experience of this writer (and he is not alone) is that the practice in the parishes belies Vatican II. It is as though Vatican II did not ever happen. If it did, it was only to give token recognition to the laity; to allow parishioners the ‘opportunity to contribute to the Church’ through participation as readers, cleaners, special ministers etc., and of course in the matter of money. However, once the money has left the contributor’s hands, he/she does not have any say in how that should be spent. Too often, contributions are taken as a given without even the grace to acknowledge the giver and without a word of appreciation. Spiritually and intellectually, the laity does not have anything to offer the Church because the Church leaders know all the answers. In the light of these atmospherics, I write this submission with a sense of pessimism that this whole exercise is little more than a talk-fest. The missionary nature of the Catholic Church is all but absent in Australia. Priests’ lives have become comfortable and to take on an extra task is often too much trouble: “No, I can’t see this dying patient (or hear a confession or visit a parishioner) today. It is my day off.” parish priests can disappear from the parish for days and no one but the closest of the

inner circle—if that—will know of their whereabouts. Many parishioners don't feel 'ministered to' anymore. To this end, it would help a great deal if there was set up a structure that can independently deal with complaints from lay people about the clergy. Right now there is very little faith in this process as the most common response is to protect the clergy.

The Church and human relationships.

I believe God is asking that we be more accepting of people in the honest choices that they make. In the case of divorced Catholics, homosexuals, same-sex marriages, again the arrogance of the Church is most prominent. The Church has all the answers and occupies the moral high ground. If you don't agree, you're wrong. Scores and scores of young people genuinely feel rejected by the Church because of the choices they have made in their relationships with other human beings. It is no surprise that the young are not having their spiritual yearnings answered by the Church and so are turning away from it. This is particularly galling when confronted with the Church leaders' hypocritical attitude to their own who have transgressed. It would be an interesting study to examine how much of the sexual abuse would have really been addressed by Church leaders if the social climate of the day had been unchanged from the 1940s and 50s. It is impossible for the Church to say that it was not dragged kicking and screaming to the position that it now so sanctimoniously occupies. Yes, it is good to see the measures out into place to protect children (and adults). It would have been better if the Church was not forced into these measures. Very, very sadly, the police officer who commented that the Church cooperated with the investigation in the manner that a protester who lies in the middle of the road cooperates with the police, sounded very credible.

The Church and Women.

I believe God is asking of the Church to give up its patriarchal attitudes. I do not believe any more that the male apostles were a signal from Jesus about the gender that should lead the Church. I (and many like me) believe this is nonsense. I find that giving women the right to read at Mass, distribute communion, do so many other token jobs, but withhold from them the right to be ordained as patronising, demeaning, hypocritical and disrespectful. In every aspect of human endeavour it is recognised (even by the Church) that women have equal standing. Indeed, not just equal standing, but a necessary equal standing. It is recognised that without equal participation from women, organisations are diminished; families are diminished, political and business structure are diminished. Yet the Church does not see its own diminishment due to the lack of female participation. If the Plenary Council does not make a case for granting women an equal seat at the table, then this whole exercise is a duplicitous charade and a cruel joke on the Catholics of Australia.

The Church and the ordinary faith-filled follower.

I believe the Church is being asked to recognise the value and worth of the faith-filled follower. The running of parishes needs to devolve downwards. There is a sense of frustration among many well-meaning parishioners when their concerns and thoughts for the parish and the community are brushed aside by a parish priest keen to impress his superiors.

As I contemplate my answer to this question, which I am musing over carefully and sincerely, I ask that those reading our submissions will contemplate seriously what is said from the hearts and souls of the laity, and others, of this wonderful universal Church that we are wanting to be a part of, with the same care and consideration in which they are written. Our faith, and the Holy Spirit, can guide us so well in the true way of the Church that Christ wanted. Christ speaks to the humble, the meek, the poor and the downtrodden, and has done for over 2000 years. To many of these people, it would seem that the hierarchy of the Church has lost its way. I feel that God is asking us to bring Christ back into our lives, and into the Church, and to live and breathe the messages of the gospels. I feel that God wants us to understand the mission of the Church that comes with our baptism, and that he wants us to understand that we are all equal in the eyes of God, and that there is no place for a hierarchy that wants power and privilege. The clericalism that exists in the Church today is totally against the plan that God has for all of us. By understanding the Bible teachings, we can come closer to living the life that God wants for us. Our Church needs to include mission, and community. The power of the laity comes from its desire to love God, and to love one another. To live in community

and to support and care for one another, those we know and those we don't. To be able to trust one another and to trust those that are supposed to be guiding us in our daily lives. God is wanting us to remember why we are Church. Power, privilege and riches are not what he gave as an example of the sort of Church he was proposing. This is not how he lived, or who or what he chose to spend time with. How did our Church get it so wrong!! How did our Church decide that it was above God's Law? How did our Church decide that the very people God has always been calling to come to him were not worthy or important enough to be a part of the Church? Our Church, The People, the Laity We are the Church, and we have been crying out for Shepherds to guide us on our journey. What do I think God is wanting of us today? I think he is wanting us to get back to being able to love one another, to trust one another, to care for one another, to be worthy of His love, and to be truthful in our mission and purpose. It can be quite challenging to be a Catholic in today's society. One can be ridiculed and laughed at, disregarded, and the butt of many a sad joke. This has been my experience on occasion, but the passion with which I have been prepared to stand up for my faith, and beliefs, has surprised me. I want to fight from within the Church, not leave like so many others are doing. I want my Church back, and I want to be able to accept the calling of the Holy Spirit that I feel so strongly, to encourage the changes that God is wanting of us in Australia today.

To come together to share the values learnt by listening to the Spirit. Because our Multi-cultural Country has grown we need to be more accommodating, by having more priests, Religious Leaders which would enable us to handle a larger population. 2. How can we include our many divorced, as they need the Eucharist more than ever in their lives? 3. We the Church have to be the hope for the future generations—by building up our IDENTITY. 4. We must stand up for our Australian Rights in allowing freedom of Religion. Our Church has been badly damaged which means that extra prayers are most important. 5. Led by the Spirit we should be more outreaching to other Christian Faiths. (As per Vatican II document on Faith Sharing.) 6. Be more actively evangelistic. 7. To be faithful to the Teaching of Jesus and strive for Integrity of life. 8. Be more outspoken about our Catholic viewpoint on various topics e.g. same sex marriage, euthanasia, abortion, the sanctity of the Confessional, and why we believe as we do. 9. In a mostly non-Christian Society, I feel it is important to live my life as a practising Catholic as well as I can, as a way of evangelising. You cannot change people but you may be able to make a difference by example. 10. To reach out to others by providing Evangelising Programmes. 11. To be open to the changing World and provide good and solid Teaching of the Gospel. 12. NO PRIEST mainly young, should be in far out parishes without support as possibly this may lead to loneliness e.g. in [ - ], one priest handles [ - ] to [ - ] 350 kms away. This is tempting fate, in my mind. 13. More work to be done with bringing our priests up-to-date with Vatican II documents, especially in regards to the importance of the Laity. Also, more approaches to other Faiths, and also much more with other Christian faiths. All mentioned in Vatican 2 Documents but rarely mentioned by our priests. 14. Some priests are not up to standard with Preaching, so Preaching Teams should be well trained and help on occasions. 15. Too many people are excluded e.g. Divorced couples. At the Last Supper, Our Lord didn't say, to follow me but NOT you or NOT you. We should all (somehow) be included. 16. Dislike of others because of Race or Religion, usually leads to hate. This should be discouraged, at all times. 17. Women should be more involved in Leadership—and I definitely not saying as priests. 18. We are facing a terrible time with this forthcoming Election with GREENS AND LABOUR wanting to interfere with our Freedom of Religion. Also stopping Chaplains in our schools. 19. It is supposed to be separation of Church and State in Australia but more and more, the State is wanting to interfere. 20. Catholics should be more Educated as to understanding our Faith is about a deep prayer life with the Trinity, and not the Vatican although we must always pray for our Holy Father Pope Francis. Especially in these rough times.

To look afresh at the world, and to develop a guide to good living that considers all aspects of the world and its peoples, including what science has revealed. The pre-scientific view of the world, with the earth at its centre, man as the peak of God's evolutionary creation, and a simple world created for man's use and benefit, no longer holds. The traditional view was based on ideas of the time:

<p>Familial relationships (father/son), Kings and kingdoms, Blood sacrifices of humans to appease the gods. With the rise of science and our increased knowledge of the world, we now know this is primitive and inadequate. We need a new story!</p>
<p>To be free to express our beliefs. To participate in the sacraments. To share our beliefs and the Good News with others.</p>
<p>The Church needs to increase catechesis and faith formation especially in adults. There is significant "division" within the Church at present which partially stems from a poor understanding of the teaching of the Church and the deposit of faith as revealed by Jesus Christ through Sacred Scripture and Tradition. A better understanding will highlight the beauty and importance of Catholic teaching. The bishops and priests need to not only be better formed themselves but empowered to teach without fear or favour. Orthodox Catholic teaching is the future of the Church.</p>
<p>To help draw people back to the Church and the riches the sacraments have to offer. To offer more workshops and retreats for people to explore their faith and seek healing. For parishes to build a greater sense of community where people feel comfortable talking about and sharing their faith.</p>
<p>It is very concerning that we are no longer teaching with clarity God's laws and the consequences of not living according to them. The Pope and some cardinals are no longer leading with God's spirit and truth, and we have become a flock without a shepherd.</p>
<p>A. Accountability mechanisms to enable open and transparent decision-making by Church leaders in the following areas: i) complaints handling ii) appointment of bishops (needs lay participation) iii) selection, training, formation of clergy and religious iv) governance of the Church (lay participation).          B. A change in attitude among those Church leaders who are dismissive of lay participation in matters of Church governance.          C. An independent panel in each diocese to ensure accountability mechanisms are implemented: the bishop would not have the power to choose the panel.</p>
<p>It's time to stop hiding. God is asking the Catholic Church in Australia at this time to stand up and be in the forefront in the public arena. The Catholic Church was given into our hands by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is time for us, the Church to regain our lost ground. When disaster comes, {fire, earthquake, flood, etc.} we as a Church need to be there; helping consoling, counselling, comforting, providing shelter, food clothing etc. We as a Church could take up once again processions, as in Eucharistic Processions, public Stations of the Cross. Bring our Nativity sets outdoors again, display banners, posters, etc. around our Churches. Open our doors and let people in. It's time to stop hiding and be in the forefront as we used to be. We need Courage and Conviction. We need infilling of the Holy Spirit and we need to display the love of Jesus in a tangible way.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be a compassionate Church, to be transparent, to be honest, to celebrate liturgy with love and not rubrical exclusion. We need to have women included in governance and take a rightful role in decision-making, not just when employed in a service, but in the whole life of the Church. We need to do away with clericalism as an attitude of the people and behaviour of our clergy. Priests should concentrate on the sacramental and pastoral life of a parish and leave the running of other matters to lay people who are qualified to do so.</p>
<p>I truly believe that what God is asking for at this time in the Church is unity. The 'rad trads' and "liberals' have done much damage to the body of Christ over the years and I believe in that in this current darkness that is our time in history, the Lord wants unity and obedience to the Magisterium before anything else. The faithful are confused and somewhat lost. Unity and obedience to the chair of Peter is the remedy. I also believe we need transparency and clarity—from all Church leaders including the Holy Father. Clear communication. No cover-ups. Thank you.</p>
<p>To stand up and be counted, and accountable as a Church—If they have not yet done so I would like the Plenary Council members to view the 7.30 Report from Tues 26 Feb and the ABC Q&amp;A session Monday 4 March. In particular, I have concerns about the response given re Confession, and the way this is so often brought up in the media. Other than a very good article last year in the Tablet by Richard Leonard, I have not heard any Church official interviewed deal well with this issue and in a</p>

forthright manner acknowledge 1—that child abusers are most unlikely to go to confession, 2—if they do, they must be counselled by the priest to go and put right the wrong—owning up to the authorities, and 3—cannot simply be forgiven without signs of real remorse, and the willingness to change, which includes owing up. We need to be educating the Masses rather than allowing the misconceptions to perpetuate. We need to help people see beyond the Church as simply saying NO to Contraception and Gays. Help people see the loving wisdom behind teaching on contraception, the need to prevent a 'contraceptive mentality' and focus on respect and dignity, which includes the right of each couple to determine its use in accordance with their conscience, taking account of the Church teaching and their own circumstances.

I believe God is asking us to rediscover a post-baptismal catechumenate within which people are instructed towards adult faith. I believe God is asking us to return to sources, customs and traditions of the early Church, whereby before receiving baptism the catechumens would undertake a process of formation. In this process they would learn about the Christian faith and understand what it means to become an adult Christian. They received instructions towards adult faith. This was done by a group of lay people, not just by the clergy. It was also done in small communities where people would live in communion and praise and where they would discover what it meant to 'love the other'. Helped by the Holy Spirit, they would come to know this 'other' in their community, share meals with them, help them in times of need etc..

God is asking us to be a more open, welcoming and inclusive Church. God wants us to be a refuge, a place where wounds are bandaged—a place of healing and reconciliation.

God is asking us to restore dignity, reverence and the sense of sacredness to our Liturgies and sacramental Celebrations. Our Churches are turning a market place and an entertainment centre. Our Liturgies are becoming too cluttered with add-ons that are out of place and unnecessary i.e. Father's day, Mother's day, Valentine's day, Chinese New Year, Mission Sunday, Fund-raising promotion, birthdays, anniversaries, inappropriate music and hymns, endless chatter, noises and distractions of all kinds.

This is the last day of submission!! Surely, a prompting from the Holy Spirit, maybe? I am responding as a lapsed cradle Catholic who by the grace of God, is journeying back to the faith. It is a journey indeed from lukewarmness, to "conscience rules", to "checking the box", to "Jesus is really in the Eucharist", to "I am such a sinner and needing Jesus in the sacraments and still struggling". With that, I see our Church living the times described in Romans 1:18–32. The recent scandals and difficulties in the Church are visible fruits of the evil that has engulfed Church and society. God is surely calling us to come back to Him, we have drifted so far apart from his Word that the fruits of evil are now made fully visible and we are asked to decide where we want to stand. Has the Church been blinded by what God is showing us today? Why has Holiness made its exit from our Churches right up to the Vatican and the Top Shepherds? Apart from the general statement that the Evil One is attacking the Church (which is true), can it be. ... that the primary problem with us Catholics, from laity, right up to the very esteemed Shepherds, is that they "DO NOT REALLY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS REALLY IN THE EUCHARIST". If one really believes that he has met his Lord at the Eucharist, does that not change his way of life completely ... from Holiness to Obedience to Fear of the Lord, to basically everything Catholic? Why is this so? Why has the Source and Summit of the Catholic Faith been railroaded by Modernism, Relativism, Feminisms, etc. etc. The reader of this submission should know by observing the "Crowd at Adoration", the Reverence when receiving the Lord of the Universe at the Eucharist, How Sin and Hell and Satan and Repentance is seldom preached. To our Shepherds reading this, You will have to answer Jesus on this, Are you treating your vocation as a job or a Shepherd of Christ? Are you for truth or the ways of the world or even a wayward boss—bishops and cardinals?? Do you call sin a sin or do you subscribe to Mercy only—continue to live in sin, without repentance? As a returning Catholic it is so difficult to see these things in the True Church of Christ and to defend the faith especially from Protestants who now flaunt the scandals as "Jesus was never in your Church ". To summarise, 1) Come back to God in Holiness. 2) Teach those casual Catholics that Jesus is Really in the Eucharist and "Don't leave class until you get it" 3)

Shepherds to preach and teach what Jesus wants us to hear and do—the clear path to our salvation, to Holiness and sacraments. 4) Mandatory Bible study for all Catholics— This is a huge failure of the Church. I believe God wants us to get back to Basics—101. We have lost our way, esp. from the very TOP of our Shepherds. Evidence—Cardinals opposing cardinals, bishops opposing bishops on fundamental beliefs. Again, if A Catholic is not able to live Jesus in the Eucharist, it will reflect the state of the Church.

I do not know much about Church administration or how to run a council. I am not very well informed on Church issues nor do I know the details. I have not even been a very well practicing Christian until very recently (or at least trying to be). I do know how difficult it is today for young people without God though. I know because I was there. I don't think you need any sob stories or to be reminded of the way things are today. I just think it would be helpful to share with you how I found my way back to the Church and to God. Until recently (October of last year), I was not an active member of the Church. I was raised in Ireland, in a Catholic society and in a Catholic family; however, I would have described myself as a very lax Catholic. I was not a bad person, just a bit confused by our lukewarm society. I have found private revelation to be a massive help for me, particularly the revelations of the Divine Will as made know to us through Luisa Piccarreta. For me, Divine Will has gifted me with a lot of love. It's now something I couldn't imagine my life without. I feel like a stronger and all-rounded better person. To say it is completely due to Divine Will might not be 100% accurate. But in my heart, I know it to be true. [ - ] 27 years old, Physiotherapist.

God is asking us to come together as 'one body' to heal and strengthen His Church and to focus on Him and His love, and to be 'selfless' not 'selfish'—beginning with love for God and then love for one another. ("Love one another as I have loved you"). If we go back to starting with 'love' of one another then we can heal from the past abuses that have occurred and also prevent it from happening again; also through love of God and for one another we can understand and follow the teachings of God's laws and the Church—it is sad today to hear of so many in the Church including clergy and religious who speak against the teachings of God's law and the Church (including our 'moral theologians'). Let's get back to loving God and embracing and understanding all the truths He has given us and putting our own opinions aside.

To promote peace and forgiveness, to stop gossip and build relationships with one another. We need to better serve the people of Australia. We cannot continue to only focus on the failing and wrongs of the Church. We need to focus on the good that the Church has done and does in the world. Priests are just representatives of Jesus, and while some have done bad things, many have done good things. We need to see the good things that priests have done and not put them all in the same basket.

I think, God is asking us to be humble, especially in His Holy Church: 1. I would like to see the communion railings reinstated, to enable us to receive Our Lord on our tongues, kneeling (those who can) or standing. 2. Women to wear the veil in The Church to symbolise humility. I have never seen a picture/statue of Our Lady without a veil. I think, people who have been blessed to see Our Lady, she is seen wearing a veil. 3. No female priest please. My opinion, if Christ wanted women priests, He would have definitely chosen Our Lady as the first female priest; God has blessed Our Lady with so many, many beautiful titles. Women can/may hold other positions in The Church approved by the Pope. 4. Parishes to hold scripture classes regularly and explain "The Holy Mass" at least once a year. A lot of us do not know the value/meaning of a Holy Mass or the sacraments. 5. Prayers to be said during Holy Mass or at the end, Hail Mary and Prayer to St. Michael for protection from the Evil One. Thank you very much and God bless you all.

God's intentions have never changed and remain constant—to be called to be outstanding disciples of Christ, to have a strong participation in the sacraments, and to have a deep understanding and knowledge of our faith, so we may share it with others to pray as the Gospels encourages us to. As a practicing Catholic young adult, I am confronted with amoral, liberal and anti-Church teachings on a daily basis in Australia. On behalf of the Catholic youth in this country, I feel we need the values of the Church instilled in us deeply, from our Catholic community and parishes, so that we are

equipped to deal with the world on a moral and spiritual level. We have seen a drastic decline in Church attendance, particularly in the youth, and we need to address the situation of why this is the case.

To pray and to remain faithful to His Church which He started 2000 years ago. To partake in his spiritual food he gave us, the body and his blood as often as we can. To be obedient to his commandments by setting an example to others by way of being Humble, Praying and Adhering it and not simply by preaching about it. To venerate his Holy Mother as much as we possibly can, as she with her son's grace has brought numerous conversions to the Catholic Church throughout history ... worked miracles and changed people's lives, like mine. To venerate our great Saints in our churches in Australia, speak about the lives they lived and their conversions, and the things they achieved for the Church, by way of suffering, penance and prayers so that we too as normal lay people come to understand them more and try to live our lives like theirs with the Grace of God.

Maybe God is asking the impossible - the hierarchy has hi-jacked the Church and major reform (perhaps Luther style) may be too late. However; one should always have hope and I strongly feel God is asking us, the laity, after decades of betrayal by the bishops of Australia, to speak out. For decades we have been calling out for reform to clericalism, in effect for us, a West Bank/Trump style wall. I am sure Jesus would have sacked/defrocked most bishops by now for their neglect, deafness, arrogance and other behaviours. As parents, we cannot in honesty, pass our faith to our children and grandchildren, we have been left with empty shells, like rudderless ships. Our children listen politely when we talk of our faith/Church; however, after a lifetime of Catholic family and schooling they have grown cynical of Catholicism, disillusioned and seeking other spiritual pathways. This breaks our heart. We talk with other Catholic parents of our shared loss and grief, all desperate for major reform and fearful of a 'turning inward' and move to a more fundamentalist style Church. Our Church is in crisis; voices of good people such as Francis Sullivan are not being listened to. Sadly, this Synod is being widely viewed as a marketing exercise taking attention off the outcomes of the Royal Commission. Maybe, God, if we listen carefully, would say boycott the whole (P. Council) show. Response in parishes has been one of near-total disinterest in attending talks or putting in a submission. Those who no longer attend Church refuse to participate in focus groups, refuse to put in submissions despite being the very people God wants us to listen to. An outcome of a bishops of Oceania Conference a number of years ago banned any discussion in the Church of implementing married and/or women priests, I hope this will not happen again. Australian Catholics feel the voice of God to be very faint. This time around we must demand to be listened to. If this doesn't happen, our Church may move to being a small irrelevant far-right fundamentalist sect. I strongly feel God is asking us, the laity, to speak out after decades of betrayal against the bishops of Australia. The hierarchy has hi-jacked the Church and major reform (Luther style) is overdue. For decades we have been calling out for reform to clericalism, a West Bank/Trump style wall for us. God's world has changed from medieval times and I am sure Jesus would have sacked/defrocked most bishops by now. As parents, we cannot pass our faith to our children, we have been left with empty shells. Our children listen politely when we talk of our faith/Church; however, after a lifetime of Catholic family and schooling they are cynical, disillusioned and seeking other spiritual pathways. This breaks our heart. With our peers, we talk of loss and grief, desperate for change. Our Church is in crisis.

I believe that God is asking Australia to be witnesses of the Truth who is Jesus. Our society is faced with many challenges and is becoming more and more pagan. The truth is being watered down, rejected, ridiculed and/or spat upon, changed to suit various ideologies/situation ... JESUS is the way, the truth and the life. He doesn't change. The truth IS. Many people are getting mixed up and confused. The opposite of peace is not war but confusion. To many people, it seems the goal posts are changing. People need to KNOW AND EXPERIENCE Jesus in a very REAL way. We need to proclaim the truth and do so in love. Many are fed up with the wishy-washy witness of the Church in some areas or the Church harping on about sexual abuse; well that is what it sounds like. Yes, we need to address this problem and help our victims. I am all for that. However, we do have our problems, challenges and needs that need to be addressed. What about the aimlessness and

<p>uncertainty of our youth, marriage breakdown, suicide, mental illness, the hedonistic goals of some, just to mention a few?</p>
<p>I think there is an important need to get back to the basics of when our Church started at Pentecost. A deeper understanding of a relationship with Jesus as a personal Saviour and an experience of the Holy Spirit (baptism in the Holy Spirit). Both lay people and priests and religious need this deeper experience. Then everyone will to give their lives wholeheartedly in being his disciples and to service the Church and have an effect on the world.</p>
<p>I think God is asking to act as Jesus taught us, to love one another and stop hurting each other. Show kindness and compassion, and be inclusive. Jesus was put on this earth 2,000 years ago to save us from ourselves. As the gospel says, the new commandment, love one another as I have loved you.</p>
<p>It is asking us to consider our future, our survival as a Church in these difficult times. How can we change, improve our standing in the community. To gain back respect and prove to all persons that the Church has made some terrible mistakes but is/has learned will continue to learn from those mistakes and will set a real course for major, like never seen or heard of before in history. A drastic change is every aspect of the Church MUST happen. Everything is in need of change from the very top to the bottom; otherwise our Church will decline and fade away along with everyone's faith.</p>
<p>For the faithful to remain faithful, to trust in God's plan for each one of us. We must never give in to the temptations of our secular world. I think God is asking us to not forget that his Truth will never change. To not lose hope in what we strive for, even though scandals will disappoint us. The faithful must double up efforts in pray, adoration, rosary, etc., because our extra efforts will gain more Grace from our Lord, to compensate for the sin of others. I think God wants our Church leaders to continue to promote the good things our Faith develops in our communities, especially among the young. Apologise for the past, but do not let the past define our future; concentrate on all the good possibilities that are available to our young Catholic Australians. Laying strong foundations among our young, will form a healthy future for the Catholic Church in Australia. We must not sit back, we must be in the public eye more, promoting all the healthy things of our Faith; show the joy in the faces of the young Catholics, organise more events between World Youth Days.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be more compassionate to our fellow man and to start doing more to right long-standing wrongs in Australian society. Areas where we need to work are our treatment of Indigenous people and refugees, how we view the long-term unemployed and chronically poor in our society and tackling corporate greed head-on.</p>
<p>GOD wants to see change! Keeping up with the times change, adjusting to our current and future society. To acknowledge our wrongs and learn from them and move on to a better and more inclusive Church with liberal views, not choking ourselves with old rules—rules brought on by men, driven possibly by greed and power, wealth and control. Otherwise the Church will crumble from within.</p>
<p>A Poor and Servant Church One key outcome of the Second Vatican Council was a new awareness of and concern for the Church to identify itself more closely with the poor. This awareness was largely the achievement of a relatively small group of bishops who adopted the name “the Jesus Christ and the Church of the Poor” and who met regularly at each session of Vatican II in an effort to promote a Church aligned with the poor. They sought first of all to lead by example, taking concrete actions in their own lives to bring themselves closer to the poor. Examples of these included moving out of their episcopal palaces, selling their episcopal rings and the like. (See Appendix I) They also sought to go further in their roles as pastoral leaders in their dioceses. Instead of giving priority to ornate cathedrals, they prioritised social housing. They encouraged cooperatives among the poor and promoted lay apostolate movements to further extend this work. At the end of the Council, the group organised two special Masses, one for the workers, held in the working-class parish of St Michael Archangel in Rome’s Pietralata district, which was the titular parish of YCW founder, Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, and the second at the Domitilia Catacombs. At this second Mass, the bishops adopted the document that became known as the “Pact of the Catacombs” in which they sought to set out more clearly their vision of a Church of the Poor by renouncing “the appearance</p>

and reality of riches” and committing themselves “to share, in pastoral charity, our lives with our brothers and sisters in Christ, priests, religious and laity.” After the Council, they continued to work in this line. In 1976, Argentinian Bishop Enrique Angelelli became a martyr to this vision of the Church when he was assassinated by the military for his support of farmers and labourers, and particularly his backing for land reform that threatened local landowners. Indeed, Angelelli’s death came six months after the “disappearance” of Pepe Palacio, a lay YCW leader, who was also killed for his involvement with workers. Many others followed, notably the Salvadoran Jesuit Rutilio Grande, whose example inspired Archbishop Oscar Romero. In the wake of the long series of scandals that have struck the Australian Church in recent decades, I propose the Pact of the Catacombs as a model of the practices to be adopted by the Australian Catholic Church at the Plenary Council in 2020. [ - ]

Embrace Christian Meditation in schools, parishes throughout Australia. This is how ecumenism is mostly happening for Christian denominations. Promoting CM is an 'immediate' way for young people to encounter the Spirit, and an introduction to community. Include women in the structure, hierarchy, decision-making of the Church. Extend the priesthood to them and in the meantime, pay respect to women who perform the same duties as men by not excluding them—for example—from being called Acolytes. Review marriage/relationship options for priests. (How do other denominations manage this?). Imagine how the Church in Australia would function if the women who carry out countless roles, decided to 'sit down'. Use media/technology to raise Positive awareness of the Church in Australia to young people. E.g. an increasing number of young people are socially aware. Do they know who this Jesus is? The Christ that Christians follow? Do they know of the good things that Catholics do throughout Australia in following that Christ? Not institutions, but ordinary people?

To be more focused on faith formation for current Church members of all ages and to bring faith to those outside the Church (evangelisation). Faith formation is fundamental to other important aspects of Church or Christian life. Catechists are necessary to guide people in how to grow in faith, how to respond to the challenges of a secular world, how to deal with the challenges of life and their history, how to love God and others, how to forgive, etc. Parents with faith can pass on faith to their children which is essential for the future of the Church. Young people with faith can understand their purpose and vocation—whether to holy orders or to a Christian marriage or even to remain chaste. A post baptismal program would help people to grow their faith. The Church needs to be more about community and giving people a place to grow and share together—not just attend church as an individual. Church needs to be a place where people can find a real connection to God, not just go through rituals. Where the liturgy is purposeful, meaningful, joyful and brings hope. People who have true faith will then reach out to people outside the Church, either by announcing the gospel or being a sign of the love of God in their everyday life. Priests also need faith formation and a Christian community that keeps them connected to real life and people's problems. This connection to people keeps them real and stops parishioners putting them on a pedestal and allows them to connect as a human being with other people—not just a priest to parishioner relationship. priests should not be alone—the same way the God said "Man should not be alone" and created a wife, priests should also not be alone—not to marry, but to have a companion—another priest, a seminarian, a family with them to help them to not be isolated. Lay people with faith can also share in the role of evangelisation. They can also announce the love of God and forgiveness of sins if they already have a genuine experience of it. Youth and young people need to have a big focus. In addition to helping parents to raise their children in the faith, Catholic schooling needs to be a solid foundation to support parents. The general experience of our group is that Catholic schooling did not do this for us, and does not do this for our children. Catholic schools are seen as a better alternative to public schools—not a place for genuine Catholic families to give their children a Catholic education. This problem derives from people only baptising their children as an entry to a special club that grants access to schools etc. schools are run like businesses where Catholic identity and faith formation is not a priority for teachers or students. How can children/youth grow in faith if their parents and teachers don't have faith? Young people need clear direction and guidance about how to live a

<p>Christian life. Schools moved from fear-based teaching to 'God is love', but it needs to be in the middle of both.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church is like a second home for me. It is where I go when I am happy or during any difficult times. The priests are always very welcoming and willing to help. As this moment, the Church is facing some challenges and it is important for us to remain united. Getting the Catholic people together in family friendly events evolving prayers and activities for kids with the participation of the priests to build a strong community and in that way we can look after each other.</p>
<p>Unification of the Church. I understand that the Church is always striving to achieve this, but in the last few years, there have been particular issues that threaten the unity of the Church. Issues like: —Traditional Latin Mass vs Novus Ordo—there is judgment and toxic gossiping coming from both sides, however, this comes from misunderstanding Vatican II's teachings, the meaning of the Mass and Church history.</p> <p>- Having strong stances on topics like contraception, homosexuality, gay marriage, etc.—I understand that the Catholic Church is very clear in the Catechism however there are priest and bishops in Australia who, from the pulpit, either shy away from speaking the truth, present the truth in a vague and obscure way (leading to multiple interpretations), or outright reject and contradict these teachings. Of course, having Rome say one thing and then your priest say another creates doubt and disunity.</p>
<p>To Renew the Australian Church with BIG Changes. To be open to and embrace significant change in all areas of the Church. To change the structure of power and hierarchy in the Church. To look for and develop new models of parish and community to address modern needs. To act on all the Vatican II promised but did not deliver.</p>
<p>Individually, to grow deeper in our knowledge and conviction of the faith as that is the only way we can confidently stand firm in our faith when faced with questions and battles. Also, as an organisation to do more acts of charity, so that others can see the good alongside what they view as bad (in terms of our stances of homosexuality, abortion, etc.).</p>
<p>God wants to draw his people back to Himself, especially our youth and our children. Our churches and parishes aren't growing in strength, as individuals and families are not learning about and growing in a day to day relationship with their Creator God and our Lord Jesus Christ. The attractions, demands and distractions of the internet, 24/7 TV and entertainment entice us away from living lives centred on God through his Holy Word and through the sacraments. Our children at Catholic schools are learning more about Religion and the organisation of the Church, than about developing and practicing daily Quiet time praying and reading the Bible every day, either individually or as a family. Our children do not know their Bible stories! They do not know of Samson or of Daniel or of Esther ... they are not rooted in Scripture and prayer (like Jesus was) like many of us parents had in our own primary schools, Catholic and/or Protestant. God is wanting his Church, his body, to strengthen and grow. Great things are being done in acts of justice and good works in the community, but this is not going to last long term through the next generation if babies, children, youth and young families are not being "grown" in our faith and in the Word, and in their daily walk with God as a focus. Children as young as 12yr are receiving the sacrament of Confirmation, deeming them "adults" in the Church. It is far too young. A 12-year-old is not mature enough to decide about going to Mass every Sunday; too young to have established a personal journey in Christ in which they are rooted. They need their parents to support and help them and encourage them still, and attend to attend Mass as a family and see examples of other Christians and Catholics in the community. Confirmation is not a "magic wand" which then allows them to be "done and dusted" with the Church.</p>
<p>1. To be good role models of our faith for children 2. Live whole-heartedly and joyfully our baptismal commitments as individuals and as family/parish communities 3. Be obedient to the will of God 4. Be deeply prayerful and contemplative people 5. Move away from rituals and meaningless devotions but build true faith that makes changes in the lives of people 6. Seminarians live independently as</p>

<p>they will for the rest of their lives, meeting together for prayer and study and sometimes leisure. 7. Be united in this troubling time for the Church and the allegations being made to be united and have faith in the good things that the Church has and will continue to do for others. 8. Priests, religious and other Church leaders to encourage the laity by their example in dedicated service. 9. Parishes are managed by lay people with the priest as the spiritual leader, animator, and advisor. 10. Repent of our past failings. 11. Lead people in true faith and hope in God in order for everyone to repent for the rights abuses of the Church asking God's forgiveness as people of God. 12. To be perfect as our heavenly father is perfect. 13. Make our actions count—not just words but good deeds. 14. Be receptive/welcoming of all people in our great country of Australia—Indigenous /refugees/migrants 15. Start teaching religion to children in the families and daily prayers 16. Lagging behind of Catholics with the use of advancements in technology and internet to make full use of it for Jesus name.</p>
<p>-Evangelisation and calling the world higher, not the Church lower. -More priest and laity partnership in parishes -More support of the local and rural priests in their parishes -More formation and Evangelisation type training available to people 16 and above. - Bring unity to the Church. Pray, worship and listen together as one. -Teaching to read scripture to primary and high school students.</p>
<p>I think God is asking of us to attend monthly confession. Also, for the priests to give teaching and formation on the value of Confession, or Reconciliation. Our Lady at Medjugorje told the children to go to confession. Also, I think God is asking of us to pray more. To find ways to get families, with their children into Sunday Mass. How and where else can high school students learn the teachings of the Church to take with them into the world on leaving school? Parents with their children attending Mass could become a praying people. I think God is asking of us regular and frequent confession and more prayer.</p>
<p>God is asking us to work together to create an enlightened spirituality which embraces all and particularly young people. Youth need an ideal to strive for and if it is not there they will drift away from the Church. The shame of the child abuse scandal has tarnished the Church. Very few women were guilty of abuse. We need to open the Church to women and men. Mary was there from the beginning. She was a real woman not an idealised version of woman. The new enlightened Church needs to support women and include them in all of the functions of the Church. Women have been left out of authority positions for too long but now with so many women properly trained they are ready to work together with the laity and clergy to create an enlightened Church which can rise above the shame of the child abuse scandal and be a light in the world. Women need to be involved in training seminarians to give them a good grounding in human sexuality, the realities of family life and the psychology of women.</p>
<p>1. Bishops need to be courageous in teaching Church truths and to fully support their orthodox priests as good priests often feel disenfranchised. Young people want a challenge. Watering down Catholic teaching will never attract them.</p>
<p>It is asking us to stand firm in our Catholic teaching regarding gender and not succumb to political and social pressure especially in Catholic schools i.e. boys allowed to wear dresses, share the girls' toilets and girls allowed into all boys' school.</p>
<p>He is asking us to keep close to His mother. To bring children and parents who are already in Catholic schools closer to Mother Mary through the rosary.</p>
<p>I sincerely believe that God is asking us, the Church, to: A. return our Church's central and priority message back to Christ's simple and profound message of 2000+ years ago of love, compassion, humility, forgiveness, hope; and B. bring the Church, as an institution, into contemporary 21st century world. If the institutional Church continues to operate as a 300 CE imperialist power with its: -arcane hierarchical structures, language and imperial titles; -lack of democracy/transparency/accountability; -petty bureaucratic laws and rules; -misogyny; -weird preoccupation with all things sexual; -risible dress code of middle ages elites; etc. it will continue to bring both the Institution and our Faith into ridicule, contempt and disrepute. This in turn will continue to impede the Church's ability to spread Christ's good news message. To transform the</p>

institutional Church, I believe God wishes us to address the following issues. 1. Governance To be modelled, as appropriate, on laws governing any modern large/complex organisation such as corporations, incorporated associations/charities, industrial organisations etc. \* Organisational structures to be widened and deepened to include appropriately qualified/experienced\* clerics and laity at all levels of decision-making. [\* e.g. in theology/health/education/ corporate services (finance/procurement/HR/IT, etc.) as appropriate] \*parish councils to be elected and not appointed by the priest. Priests should have no veto power over the parish Council \* Transparency—except for usual personal and commercial in confidence \* Accountability —At all levels from parish councils, including clergy, to the top. \* Language/terminology to be updated and inclusive 2. Clericalism I have a great sympathy for our priests who've often been poorly selected, poorly trained/equipped and then placed in an impossible position of local parish power with limited personal and/or financial resources ... over parishioners who often are better educated and capable (including theologically). I believe God wants us to: \*broaden the pool of priests to include women and married people. \*Make celibacy optional. \*recruit only after at least 5 years (post school) in the secular workforce. \* priests to maintain part time secular employment to ensure they: (a) keep in touch with the world, and (b) keep up with modern organisation and management trends. \* Laity to take up administration, liturgy, preaching, etc. roles in parishes \* priests in parishes to be pastors on an equal footing with other members of the parish Council. \* Mandatory P D 3. Role of the Laity. Given limited word count my simple message is PLEASE read, absorb and adopt the message in the Vatican II 'Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity' (18 Nov 1965). Together with the ordained, the Laity are part of God's Church and bring a wealth of diverse charisms. Their knowledge and skills must be respected, valued and utilised if we genuinely wish to spread God's message. They should be partners with priests.

I think we need to reclaim our Catholic identity within the culture, which is becoming so hostile to the Catholic faith, and also have more opportunities for prayer, fasting, and penance. - The return of meatless Fridays throughout the year, rather than a penance of our own choosing. - Encouragement for the laity to receive the Eucharist on the tongue and kneeling, and so stir the faithful to better understand who we are receiving in the Eucharist. - Confessions offered regularly in every parish (in particular more than once or twice per week). - Reinstatement of Holy Days of Obligation to their actual dates, and not just moved to the nearest Sunday (an example being the Feast of the Ascension being celebrated on Ascension Thursday). As Pope Pius XI says in his encyclical 'Quas Primas', paragraph 21: "For people are instructed in the truths of faith, and brought to appreciate the inner joys of religion far more effectually by the annual celebration of our sacred mysteries than by any official pronouncement of the teaching of the Church. Such pronouncements usually reach only a few and the more learned among the faithful; feasts reach them all; the former speak but once, the latter speak every year—in fact, forever. The Church's teaching affects the mind primarily; Her feasts affect both mind and heart, and have a salutary effect upon the whole of man's nature. Man is composed of body and soul, and he needs these external festivities so that the sacred rites, in all their beauty and variety, may stimulate him to drink more deeply of the fountain of God's teaching, that he may make it a part of himself, and use it with profit for his spiritual life."

This is a well-educated nation of critical thinkers with unrestricted free speech. It is increasingly secular and as such, it is a model nation for the future of the Church in the rest of the world. The Australian Church has lost integrity, most recently and publicly due to the sexual abuse crisis, but more pervasively and worryingly due to some of its teachings that do not make sense to educated laypeople, and most importantly, do not look and feel like Jesus Christ. If the Church exists to further the message and hope that is Jesus on Earth, she must look and feel like Him. Instead she looks like the Pharisees of Jerusalem, scanning the masses for impurities, seeing who should and should not deserve the sacraments rather than pouring down God's infinite love and mercy on all mankind. She is focused on keeping the few remaining elderly Churchgoers from being scandalised lest we threaten the foundation of their faith, rather than seeing the people of God as including all those who no longer go to Mass because they feel jaded, rejected or unloved—including agnostics, atheists and those of other religions. All should be made to feel the deep desire to know Jesus

better, not just those who are born into devout Catholic families. However, if rules like priestly celibacy, ordination of women, and gay marriage cannot be re-evaluated within the Church, it seems unlikely we will have any Church to speak of in 50- or 100-years' time. We are the engineers of our own destruction, and it seems ironic that these three Church policies have not much to do with the teachings of Jesus. Again, I repeat that I feel the Spirit is calling us to make the Church look and feel more like Jesus. Does she reach out to the margins of today like Jesus did—not just the refugees but to reach out and touch and hold the sexual minorities, prostitutes, divorcees, women who have abortions, people with HIV/AIDS? They all need and deserve God's love and mercy, perhaps more than the self-described 'righteous'. And if the Church does not look and feel like Jesus, what is the point? Who will want to find out about Jesus if the Church does not model his life and radical love on Earth? The question is, how can we make the Church look and feel more like Jesus? Perhaps get down with the people, welcome all their filthiest stories and remove the shame from them, ensure all are loved as and where they are, touch their souls, heal their spiritual wounds, get out of the churches and into their lives. The Church has had too much head and not enough heart. The Spirit cries for more heart! Show the people the heart of Jesus—not just to the righteous but to those who the public shun and despise. If not, I fear our Church will not last the century, and Jesus' message may be sadly lost.

To consider ways that we can live his Word. To love one another. To care for and assist those less fortunate than ourselves. To show/prove to others that Jesus and God are relevant in today's world.

God is asking a number of things for the Church in Australia. They follow: 1. For the bishops to grow some balls and stand up for important issues within the community e.g. euthanasia, abortion, same sex marriage, sexual abuse scandals ... 2. For religious education in schools to get more gutsy and actually teach about the Catholic faith. At the moment, the curriculum is so wishy washy and I have literally learnt the same thing every term for the past 5 years!! 3. Have a bigger emphasis for the need of youth in parishes because at the moment, I think that there is a lack of this! 4. Make Catholic schools actually Catholic. I am a strong practicing Catholic and go to a Catholic school and I [have] been bullied for being Catholic!

I believe that at this time, as always, God is asking us to love each other. There is too much judgement and prejudice in our society that prevents us from accepting and loving others. In some part, the Church perpetuates this through outdated ideas that have nothing to do with Jesus' love and His message. Jesus wants us to love one another, to be accepting, especially of the outsiders. The Church needs to show its acceptance of alternative relationships and families, whether they be homosexual couples or single parents, etc. Families come in so many different forms, just look at the Holy Family. As long as there is love and acceptance in a family, then it should be celebrated as a model of the Holy Family and encouraged. I believe that in these modern times, we must focus on love, not judging and persecuting. Because persecution happens in so many ways, some so small, but they have such a huge influence on the individual, and I believe our Church should always be a safe place. A place of refuge for the downtrodden. However, most people today feel judged and shunned by the Church. How are they to grow closer to God if they are pushed away by their community in faith?

God is calling the Catholic Church in Australia to form Saints within the family—starting with Husbands and Fathers. To start defining the culture of our nation rather than being consumed by it. To reclaim reverence: Particularly in a heroic, and liturgical way (for example allowing the Blessed sacrament to be received kneeling, and on the tongue). To reclaim the sacrament of confession—require priests it make available! To catechise without compromise or fear—have well-formed men leading catechesis. To reclaim masculinity—through promotion of liturgical season disciplines and returning liturgical roles to men. Building on the necessity to reclaim masculinity: the Church needs to better form and support Men to embrace the sacrifice and suffering of their vocation.

I believe God is calling us to prayer and to stand firm and be strong in the faith in a time of great rebellion away from God's teaching and His Church all over the established western world. We know the His Church would be tested. He prophesied it to Peter and we are now surely being tested on a

<p>greater scale than ever so we need to be more firm than ever in upholding traditional values and core faith beliefs as Jesus taught us.</p>
<p>Same as always. Be true to the Gospels (Church teaching), Teach the faith correctly, Pray the Mass respectfully and reverently so that others will see and can be drawn to the truth, blessed sacrament. Be honest—Stop the nonsense. Synodality is rubbish. Active listening is crap. False sorry's and we are listening now is bullshit. Speak plainly speak true. Leaders lead with respect and service and focus on the truths of Christ's teaching for today. Ensure you priests are fit and say Mass properly and validly. Stop the wishy-washy nonsense—Teach the faith respectfully. Stop the false unification and unity and nonsense that we are all one faith. Stop the false ecumenism. Christ taught us the truth and left his Church to teach to all nations. If you don't want to listen to the truth and receive the sacraments in his Churches then we will pray that you will always be welcome to join the Church of the truth. Otherwise there are many other churches of nice you can stay in. The Church is not doing any favours to its separated brethren by not telling them the truth. (The creed, etc.) They are always welcome to join the truth when they want to.</p>
<p>Get rid of the homosexuals in the priesthood, ban Catholics from being freemasons again, bring back the Latin Mass, bring back tradition. Direct parishioners how to vote in elections and have influence again in society. Stop watering down the Church doctrine to please degenerates and enemies of the Church. Bring back headscarfs and sacred silence. No women leadership as the Bible forbids it.</p>
<p>I think God is asking of us in Australia to become a more prayerful, Christ-centric people. People who despite the severe challenges posed by the modern world and the seemingly hostile attitude of many people (including media) against our faith and the very spirit of what Christ and the Mother Church stand for, continually strive to be become saints in the middle of the world. To do this, following are the key things I believe the Church in Australia must do: 1. The Church must demand more from the laity to take more active role—in evangelisation, in charitable works, in bringing back the lapsed Catholics, in being more vocal in public spaces to elaborate and witness the Catholic faith, with courage, charity and clarity. 2. Faith formation of families. Families are the fundamental unit of the society and the Church. They must be supported in forming their faith with clarity and vigour. Build strong families to build a strong foundation for the future of the Church in Australia. 3. Formation and catechesis in Catholic schools. The Catholic schools must be the seedbed of future vocations in the clergy, religious and vigorous sainthood of the laity. Currently, most schools fail to achieve this; rather than serving the future of the Church, they provide confusion and display lack of courage to tackle current issues with loyalty to Christ's teaching.</p>
<p>Witness and piety of Consecrated Religious or priest. So many young Catholics are confused with the fact that priests don't wear the collar and how nuns don't wear the habit. The reason for the habits and the collars were to be a physical witness to the faith, an inspiration to the priesthood/religious life, and to clarify that they were a priest/religious. Particularly in a time where the Church in Australia is receiving much scrutiny, I think it's so important, especially for the youth, for the priest/religious to be representing their faith with the physical garments. I have heard so many young people say they would have more confidence in their faith if they saw their leaders/priests being confident in their vocation.</p>
<p>God is asking us to come back to him with all our heart, to renew our relationship with him and to make room for him in our hearts and in our lives. He is asking us not to lose faith in him but to trust in him even in the midst of whatever is happening within the Church because he will bring healing and restoration as he has always done. Be strong and courageous, always stand up for the truth. Be not afraid.</p>
<p>To change the power base and structure of the Church to be more inclusive of the laity and in particular, women and youth.</p>
<p>The Vietnamese Catholic group after a long discussion, we see too many broken families We came up with a few points as below: 1. We would like the Church focus more on family, especially guide all couples to prepare a lot more for their marriage, more workshops for young couples preparing mentally and spiritually to start a family. 2. Have more activities for youth e.g.: sports competition,</p>

arts and music festivals, talent shows, etc. Have more young adult workshops, interact with professional guest speakers (someone who is good with youth psychology). Have this as a regular event like monthly or quarterly, etc. Once youth have attended, if they enjoy, then they will bring their friends next time. This is how the Church could guide/teach the youth in way that The Holy Spirit leads. 3. Many people (especially youth) have killed themselves, the Church need to have programs that help people focus more on the value of the soul and the body as it is the temple of the Holy Spirit. 4. Have more interaction sessions with youth where they can express their thoughts toward family, community/parish and the Church.

I believe God is asking us to take a stand against this world. The world is trying to remove God from everywhere schools, politics—as Catholics we must speak and not be silent.

I believe God is asking of us in Australia to love Christ more, to squeeze ourselves more so we could better serve Him, to give more our talents and gifts, so that Christ's plan for salvation becomes more a reality in Australia. God is asking for more Christ-centred priests, who continuously strive to become better shepherds of their flocks. Shepherds who demand their flock to give more of themselves, not much by way of speaking but by their own selfless actions, by being Christ-like. They must be courageous in forming their flock despite the plethora of barriers and thorns offered by the current prevailing antipathy against the Mother Church. They must be "ready to lay down their life," if need be, for the sake of their flock. Only by having this Christ-centeredness of the shepherds could the Mother Church in Australia firmly trudge towards the right path, not onto the "wide gate and roads", but onto the "narrow gate, where it leads to life." Unfortunately, there is at the moment much to be desired for many of the shepherds in the Church in Australia. Good news is that, we observe new young shepherds who are beacons of light and hope for the flock. We need more of them. Therefore, good formation of priests is crucial. God also expects us to care for the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist. In many instances, at least observed by my family, that there seems to prevailing weak care being afforded to the Holy Eucharist, for example spillages of the holy blood and uncaring attention being given to dropped hosts in many parishes. It would seem that there's currently weak formation among the Eucharistic ministers and, unfortunately, even among not too few priests. If the central specimen of our faith and piety, the real presence of Christ, is not well cared for, what does that say about our faith and love for our Lord? Lastly, God expects the laity and families to be supported well in their faith journey, particularly families with young kids. These are the future of the Australian Church. If they grow in well-formed families, then for sure, we'll have an advent of Christ-centred generation who will by their well-formed character, could reflect Christ in all their undertakings. They would readily respond to Christ's call: "Be salt and light for the world." How good would that be? For that must be God's call for all of us, to be saints in the world. In contrast, if the Church does not take action to support the formation and character development of families, where will that lead us? Without question, similar to what's been happening now: broken families, confused kids, young adult falling easily into the misleading raps of the culture of death and skewed sexuality, promiscuity, among others. What sad future would that be, for the Australian society, as well as, importantly, for the Church in Australia. Nonetheless, let's keep our bearings, like how St Paul has responded to difficulties: "Possumus!" Onwards, let's be on our way.

Turn back to Jesus, focus on Jesus. He is the way, the truth and the life. Jesus had spoken personally on earth, we need to go back to his teachings.

Renewal of Sacrality of sacraments—Beauty in the Church is so important, and to be honest, there are very limited churches that have that "renaissance" beauty. - Church choirs, please no bands or at least drums! It would be great to encourage Gregorian Chant and old traditional hymns (with the harmonies) to encourage Church unity and history. - No liturgical dancing!!! So many churches do this!! - Confession to be available behind the curtain. - please, no priest to be diverting away from the Mass structure - please no priest rephrasing any of the parts of the Mass.

- Love one another as God has loved you.
- Share the love
- Love our enemies

- Be part of at least 1 parish
- Try to follow the 10 commandments
- To get more people to come to Mass regularly
- To get young people more engage
- I think God is asking us to be contributing to the parish and to do as much as we can do
- Keep the Holy Spirit alive within the parish and outside it
- Living as Jesus taught and how God want us to
- Listen!
- Respond to the perception the Church is out of date
- Extend love to the marginalised and especially those who feel abandoned, especially the LGBTQI community
- Make a chance for a better future
- Involve more people (youth) in a local parish
- Just to treat people right and 'treat your neighbour' as you would like to be treated
- Be accepting of all people especially people of other or differing religions
- Be in the parish
- Follow the 10 commandments.

We believe God is asking us to stay true to our traditional and fundamental beliefs as Catholics. Not to be swayed by the media or popular culture. To stand firm in our belief about traditional marriage being between a man and a woman and the sanctity of life from the womb to the tomb. To protect the seal of confession and priestly celibacy. To ensure the Catholic Mass is not watered down and our churches remain places of reverence and devotion through more traditional designs.

I believe that God is asking of us in Australia the following:

1. Become even more centred on Christ. Especially the young adults, that the Church could provide greater support for them to get to know Christ, love Him and serve Him.
2. Catholic schools to become not Catholic-In-Name-Only but to be real instruments for leading people towards Christ, helping the young to be well-formed in the faith and to inspire them to become saints in the world.
3. The Mother Church to spur more support to young families with young kids, so that the parents are given the tools to raise kids with strong character and firm faith. Undoubtedly, this is the sure way to build a strong future for the Church in Australia. For what can happen when this done, except that future generations of Christ-centred kids will become the future leaders of the Church and the society? This is a sure way to return the Australian society back to its Christian roots.

- How to retain the faith? A lot of people are being influenced by their secular environment. They do not see the relevance of having God in their lives and just go to him out of desperate need once in a blue moon.

- When can our unanswered questions of the Catholic religion be answered?

- Relevant faith formation is required especially with what is happening around the world today.

- Have the Tabernacle present where reverence is given straight away when people enter the Church.

- Encourage more lay people participation in the church during Mass.

This is an excerpt of a larger article I have written and attached to this submission. This was written in response to a situation some years ago in which a group of us were asked to pray about why our Church community did not seem to be experiencing growth or attracting young people. Although the basic idea of what I had written had been on my heart for some time, I felt inspired by the Holy Spirit to write it and it seemed to have been confirmed for me through the writing of Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* among other sources. I feel that we need some sort of structure, however small, that will foster greater connection between members of our Catholic parishes. I believe that being united on a spiritual level only is not the fullness of what God intends for us. We are also a physical body just as the Church as a whole is a physical entity and Jesus has a human as well as a divine nature. If we are not meeting each other at the heart level, spirit to spirit, I

believe this inhibits the flow of the Holy Spirit in and through us as a living body. Existing social events in the Church calendar, while helpful and even necessary, do not always serve to help us know each other better or to keep us in touch with what each is going through (unless certain structures are in place which stimulate sharing). In encouraging and inviting one another to share something of ourselves (in gentleness, not in a pushy way; recognising that some may not be in the place to let down their guards), we help to draw each other out of ourselves. In this, we in some way fulfil the remarkable calling and mandate of God to participate in the building of His kingdom.

God is asking of us what he has asked of the entire Church from its very beginning: "Repent and believe the Good News" ... "Turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ". Regrettably among the Catholic laity and clergy alike in Australia, there is widespread Apostasy. Relativism, Liberalism, Doctrinal Error, Liturgical Abuses, Eucharistic Abuses and Loss of the Sense of Sin are so pervasive, that the majority of Catholics are either blissfully ignorant of the True Faith or are actively Dissenting from it. So, I implore you the Shepherds of the Church, appointed by Jesus Christ to be His Ministers:

- \* Humble yourselves before God and open your hearts to the Grace of Conversion.
- \* Teach the True Faith in all its fullness and richness.
- \* Refute and correct Doctrinal Error with the zeal of true Apostles.
- \* Boldly speak to the faithful about personal sin.
- \* Teach about a thorough Examination of Conscience.
- \* Preach the need for regular Confession of all Sin, but especially Mortal Sin.
- \* Very few feel the need for sacramental confession of their Sins, but nearly all of the congregation receive Holy Communion during Sunday Mass.
- \* Bring an end to the resultant Sacrilegious reception of Holy Communion by so many of the faithful at Mass every week!!!
- \* Teach the faithful to genuflect (not bow) before Jesus in the Tabernacle ... and give the Tabernacle its rightful place of honour in the centre of the Sanctuary.
- \* Actively promote Eucharistic Adoration in all parishes.
- \* Encourage daily reading of Holy Scripture and reading of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
- \* Do not allow little children to be robbed of the Faith, by tolerating the diluted catechesis which they are taught, in their preparation for the reception of the sacraments.
- \* Actively promote (including by example) the daily recitation of the Holy Rosary.

In the relentless attacks on our Catholic Faith by the media and others, I think God is asking us to remain strong and steadfast in our beliefs in the face of these attacks and continue to believe and trust in Him.

Enough wishy-washy liberalism. Strength, truth and courage.

The Church in Australia and elsewhere is being asked the same question asked of his disciples by Jesus on the Lake of Galilee. A sudden storm blew up and the boat they were in with Jesus was being swamped. Fearing for their lives, they woke him up saying, "save us we are lost". His question to them and us was, "why are you so frightened, you who have so little faith?" Signs of the times point to a storm about to swamp the Catholic Church and the Judeo-Christian elements of our society— 2016 Census shows continuing decline in affiliation with the Church, increasing secularisation and disinterest in religion, increasing average age of Church attendees ... Pew counts in the Church show declining numbers in attendance with declining youth attendance. With most Religious orders, there are declining or stagnant vocation numbers with increasing numbers of Orders having to transition their works to Lay people. The scandal of Physical and sexual abuse in Catholic institutions, especially in the past. The inordinate influence of Gender Theory throughout all aspects of our society. The attack on the Judeo-Christian family and values. ... and on and on. The storm is real. Our desperate search for answers is real. Jesus question is what God is asking us. "Why do you have so little faith?" For 400 years, the Christians lived precariously but increased in numbers because many saw that under persecution, the Christian Communities had a manner of living and responding to the attacks which came from a different Spirit. And seeing that they could live with hope and joy, the others

wanted that same SPIRIT. In 1974, there was a Synod of bishops in Rome on Evangelisation in the Church. John Paul II spoke often about the need for a New Evangelisation. This speaks of the necessity for the whole Church to announce the Gospel, inside the Church so that she could rediscover her "mojo", and outside the Church so that the Church could do her mission of announcing the Good News to the whole world. God is asking the Church in Australia to take seriously the need for those of us baptised as infants, by far the majority, to undertake a serious "post-baptismal catechumenate." (CCC 1231). This was the way/place/process in the early Christian Community where those who wanted to be Christian where led to develop and receive an adult Faith. They received the same Spirit as Jesus which continued to grow and be fed in the Christian Community. How can the Church in Australian have a "Change of heart"? The answer is not to be found in tertiary qualifications in a Catholic institution. Another connected question is how can the Church realise its Mission to the whole world and not just look after the dwindling number of parishioners, with fewer priests and religious with fewer and fewer parishes? How is the "new evangelisation" going to arrive and be taken seriously in [ - ]?

God is asking of us in Australia to be a more inclusive Church. God is asking us to move from catastrophe towards the Kingdom of God. God is asking us in Australia to welcome lay people into the churches to be more fully involved with roles such as preaching, noting the success of lay people in hospitals and schools in Australia.

We, the Church here in Australia, have had the answer to this question since the Royal Commission into the Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse reported in 2017. We know that most survivors were male and that the great majority were abused by supposedly celibate male Catholic priests and brothers. We have seen no signs of the perpetrators being defrocked by their local bishops. Nor have we seen any sign of those bishops recognising their failure to protect vulnerable young men in Catholic parishes and institutions. We are horrified to continue to witness our Church hierarchy protecting our Church and not protecting our children. Until our bishops take responsibility for their failure to protect our children and ensure that each bishop who was culpable in this scandal is removed from a position of power, we believe there is little hope for success in answering this question at our Plenary Council. The prophet Micah shows the way: "this is what Yahweh asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8). The entirely male hierarchy of priests, bishops and Archbishops in Australia need to heed this before they can expect the laity to respect and follow them in this Plenary Council. They have led the Australian Church astray. We the laity would like to help repair the Church. But the lack of humble acceptance of responsibility for the full horror of what the Church hierarchy has allowed to happen stands in the way of success. None of the bishops engaged in the cover up has come forward to confess. Worse still, it is reported that Bishop [ - ] of [ - ] has described the content of submissions being received in preparation for the Plenary Council as "pet peeves" and further denigrated their content by saying we the laity are "advocating for the same agenda we have been advocating for years." Until the bishops of Australia humbly and justly examine their own ranks and rid the hierarchy of the Church of those bishops and priests who perpetrated this horror on our Catholic boys and/or covered up the abuse in misguided protection of the Church, there seems little point in bringing the laity into a Plenary Council where the guilty hierarchy remains in control. This submission is tendered humbly after prayerful discussion. [ - ] Lifelong Catholic, reader and Communion Minister [ - ] Parish [ - ]

I participated in our parish Plenary Council Meetings. We had 4 people on our table and only 1 topic could be spoken about. I was a bit disappointed with that, the rest of our bits of paper were handed in and that was good. My thought for our community is how can we get more young people coming and being involved in our Church? We are all getting older and frailer and our parish needs help with cleaning the Church, and gardening. We advertise without success. Train the Seminarian well in Management and basic bookkeeping skills. Move priests on to another parish after so many years (6 at most in each parish). We have been lucky to have an amazing priest for many years. But not all parishes are so lucky.

<p>I think He is saying to us to return to the gospels and to listen to His message of Love and compassion and to be a Gospel for the NOW!</p>
<p>That Lay people both young and old are trained and prepared for their mission in life in the circumstances of their lives—the lay apostolate! Not just helping the priest!</p>
<p>God is asking us as to more vibrant and active with our faith. We need to not be afraid of what we believe in or who we are. Sadly, many Australians live behind a mask where they are afraid to show who they really are. This is due to many reasons of the Catholic Church not seeming relevant or important to how people live their lives today, stances of the Church that do not reflect their own way of life or opinions, naive or old understanding of faith along with scandal in the Church. More needs to be done to ensure correction teachings and good relations happen with Church.</p>
<p>God is asking Australia to remember her Christian roots, be grateful and thankful for what He has given and blessed the country. The people have to return to Him and show their love, respect and gratitude to Him. Give thanks and praise to Him at all times, sadly the people have turned away from Him and focus on themselves and place other activities as their god.</p>
<p>Spread the good news.</p>
<p>God is asking for peace. For people to convert and turn away from sin, drugs and abortion, Pray more and to go to holy Mass more, love one another. To return to the foundations of the faith. I think God would love to see people with a stronger faith and love of God in Australia as there is so much indifference and confusion. God wants unity and people to trust in him.</p>
<p>We think that God is asking us as a Church and members of his body to trust in him, grow closer to him and to be more faithful to him and his teachings. We think that this can be achieved partly by placing a much greater emphasis on formation—reminding, charitably educating and guiding the laity in relation to Catholic doctrines and teachings. Clarity is essential to understanding and ignorance is fostered by the lack of guidance in basic Catholic teachings within our churches. Teaching the laity and explaining Catholic teachings on sex, contraception, abortion, same sex attraction/marriage, euthanasia and other controversial and misunderstood topics will assist in guiding the congregation back towards God and his plan for us. Avoiding these topics or not fully explaining or guiding the laity in these matters leads to lukewarm and secular views on these matters. This is a huge issue facing the Church today as seen with a significant number of Catholics cohabiting, using contraception and supporting the pervasive culture of death. We think a special focus should be made in relation to this given the staggering number of Catholics engaging in these behaviours; we worry that there would be many Catholics not in good standing receiving the Eucharist regardless and possibly without knowing the ramifications of doing so. Teaching and guiding the laity in other basic and essential areas such as prayer, confession, mortal/venial sin, virtues to name a few is sorely needed to form and shape good Catholics. This is hardly spoken of or taught in churches. We think God is asking for more formation through sermons during Masses, educational seminars and talks on the given subjects both by the ordained/religious and also by knowledgeable lay people.</p>
<p>Where are we going? We need to change or our churches will be closed through lack of numbers and the Eucharist will be only celebrated for small groups. My contribution relates to Confirmation, Year 6 may be too young. Year 7, yes. Hopefully the main emphasis on our children's spiritual journey will be on first year high, Year 7 when as young adults, they should be taught to appreciate the Holy Spirit. Let confirmation be a highlight for them, to come to the understanding that God loves each one of us. He kept his promise and gave mankind the Holy Spirit. Jewish boys study for 6 months before their Bar Mitzvah, learning the Psalms and learning to sing them, which they do before the whole community on their big day. They know they have taken a huge step into manhood, they receive many congratulations, many gifts, have a huge celebration with their community and feel very important. Recently I was talking to an ex-priest and explaining to him the Alpha program which is taken into some prisons in the UK and how this has touched the lives of many. I summed up by saying that those hardened prisoners, murderers, rapists and women bashers for the first time realised that "God loved them". Well, ex-priest stood stock still with a shocked</p>

<p>expression on his face; maybe he was pondering whether he knows that God loves him. I didn't like to ask. It may take some years but a huge cultural change could change the future of our Church and our country and we really would become the "Great South land of the Holy Spirit".</p>
<p>To forgive what the institution has done, come back to the Church to allow us to be able to move forward so that we can build on our faith in a modern society.</p>
<p>I feel we must all come together as human beings. Follow the simple example of Jesus. He had one rule to follow. The Church had made up so many rules. That is not what Jesus asked of us. He asked us to love one another; that's it, really very simple. We don't need to complicate things.</p>
<p>To actually live the gospel—Love one another—listen to one another, care for one another. The old Church dictating down the hierarchical structure is no longer appropriate—the Church leadership has shown to be hypocritical and abusers of the most innocent. Power, control and ego do not work, and are not part of the teachings of Christ, who calls us to walk with one another, care for one another and love one another.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the St Michael the Archangel prayer be prayed at every Mass.</li> <li>2. That Adoration of the Blessed Eucharist is promoted and made available as much as possible—(whenever possible before Mass).</li> <li>3. That Bible study classes are made as available as much as possible.</li> <li>4. That people are taught as much as possible the real meaning of Christ's coming into the world and why this was needed and all that Christ has gained for us through his Passion Death and Resurrection. That people can understand that the salvation that Christ won for us includes protection from evil as well as healing on all levels mind, spirit and physical. That there is only one person who can heal you and that person is Jesus Christ.</li> <li>5. That people are taught when they pray for help that they must believe they have received—As if they already have it. And to forgive those who have harmed them and to pray for them. And to persevere in prayer until the Heavenly Father manifests their petition through Christ.</li> <li>6. And when they receive to give thanks and testimony so that it can help others to grow closer to Christ.</li> <li>7. That people should be taught about Faith—How to journey into Faith—That Faith Knows That Faith Never Doubts</li> <li>8. That people should be taught to put all their trust in Christ and as the Bible tells us and Mary showed us to Never Be Afraid. That people should be encouraged to read the Bible as it is Light It is God speaking to us It is Amazing</li> <li>9. That people should be taught that the Rosary is our Spiritual Sword and that that we can always receive Victory over evil of every kind as well as every type of help we need through our Mother Mary's intercession to her son if we pray with the Heart.</li> <li>10. That people are taught to put the Kingdom of Heaven FIRST in their lives. And the Power of the CROSS over sin.</li> <li>11. That people are encouraged when they come to church to try not to be distracted and to Focus on Christ. To listen and to pay attention with the heart and to pray with the heart. That people should understand that All Negativity comes from the devil and that All Positivity comes from Christ.</li> <li>12. That people are taught about the Devil and the evil spirits and how they can try to lead souls into the darkness maybe step by step and that if people allow this they can get more and more of a hold over them. That if this happens then—Prayer from the heart at Mass Adoration, The Rosary, St Michael the Archangel Prayer, Holy Water, Intercession of the Saints, especially Saint Padre Pio And as we are taught—Confidence (In Christ) Do Not Be Afraid</li> <li>13. Singing and Music Singing from the heart at Mass is so powerful and beautiful and as St Augustine said it is like praying twice and so it is a wonderful way to bypass the mind and pray from the heart and knock most powerfully on heaven's door.</li> <li>14. The Experience of the Holy Spirit—Through Mass Adoration, The Rosary Singing WHEN FOCUSED WITH THE HEART.</li> </ol>
<p>I think God is asking that the Church in Australia is relevant to, and inclusive of all.</p>

The Catholic Church of Australia through the ACBC and CRA need to act now on implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Sexual Abuse. Do wait for Rome/the Vatican to endorse the mandatory changes that need to occur in areas of increased lay people in senior management, mandatory reporting, celibacy, priestly formation and more women in leadership roles but stand strong on our Australian commitment to improve the transparency and unity across all Dioceses and orders on dealing with a uniformed approach to complaint handling. There should be a National record keeping system that all Diocese, orders and Agencies (including Health, Education Sector, Religious and lay staff) are using to ensure there are no gaps in monitoring and tracking performance and issues. This will aid in mapping areas of concern across particular 'pockets' of the Church. There should be an 'ombudsman' type system to ensure equality and fairness as well as transparency in all Safeguards of the Church and its related entities. If Australia waits for the Vatican to endorse the change that needs to occur, I fear further faith and trust in the Church as an institution will be lost forever. Be brave and bold and work as ONE Church to improve and regain the trust of the people. There is too much disjointed autonomy between Orders and Diocese. People are not turning away from God; they are turning away from the Church. We can continue to connect to God through the Church if the Church can stay 'current'.

I believe God is asking us to make His word known to people in an easy understandable and modern manner. At the moment, the liturgy is very complicated for young people and lacks a personal relevance and drive to affect a person's life. So many words and repetition can make worship very dry and has the effect of turning people away from the liturgy. Music is outdated and homilies rarely a practical interpretation of the readings. I struggle to take my children to Mass because they continually say that they get nothing from it and after the Mass I often have to agree with them. I think God wants people of all ages to experience a genuine sense of belonging to a Catholic community that will make its members develop an intimate relationship with Jesus. Life is so difficult that we need a place to come to in order to be nourished and strengthened for the journey ahead. Religious education in Catholic schools needs to be driven to empower students to live in a meaningful relationship with Jesus rather than bombarding them with Catholic facts that they simply rote learn for a test.

I think God wants us to create a more practical and loving atmosphere at church. The readings and homilies need to be kept simple and practical. The music needs to encourage worship so needs to be modern and inspiring. I believe more effort needs to be taken to bringing children and youth to God. Religion needs to be modern, practical and meaningful in their lives. Catholic schools need to be teaching about Jesus' relevance in students' lives today, instead of complicated doctrines which make no sense to them.

To stop making excuses for past sins. To stop behaving like the clergy is made up of more spiritually privileged or blessed people. To stop dragging their feet with decisions. For parishes to be held accountable and actually follow the directives that come from the archbishops. Many parishes are run like mini kingdoms.

To be open, honest and in touch with real people from a variety of backgrounds in our parish, community, state and country. To continue to actively work for justice in practical and political ways. To encourage involvement with projects that assist the disadvantaged; financially, spiritually and isolated e.g. migrants, handicapped, aged, etc. To use resources of buildings and finances to assist in improving facilities for the most ignored, e.g. homeless, survivors of domestic and sexual abuse, mentally unwell and same sex attracted and trans people. Make women's equal and equitable treatment a priority as witnessed by their positions of influence in the Church.

To share our TALENTS, GOODS, WEALTH AND BROTHERHOOD WITH ONE ANOTHER.

I believe that God is asking us to more willingly engage with modern Australian society and to present the Catholic worldview as attractive, holistic and achievable to its people. As a Religious Education Coordinator in a Catholic school, I can't help but feel that God would want a curriculum that both empowers and enriches our students and encourages them to see their faith as an attractive option to be shared and be proud of rather than a purely personal concern. God is asking

His Church to be more transparent. I can't help but feel that He would down on His Church at present. The scandals and the cover ups undo all of the good work the Church does in the Australian community and I truly believe that God would want a Church that doesn't only seek to protect its own, but seeks to protect those who are most vulnerable in society.

To work together as a community, to make a safe and better place for all of us to live. God sees the bad things that are happening in our society and is calling on us to love to each other.

We must stand up bold and strong, armed with the uncompromising truth of the Word of God as well as fidelity to the doctrines and dogmas of the Church—There can be no compromises no matter the cost. In addition, our priests need to 'preach' their homilies and keep them firmly focused on making the Word of God inspiring and attractive to their communities; little jokes and commentaries on the latest football match should be removed. We are at war and attacked both inside the Church and out. The blessing, as hard as it is, it is to purify and burn out the dross and so our constant vigilance to wisdom, holiness, and a powerful active Faith is imperative. Equally, and possibly more important is for both clergy and laity to be empowered by the living and experiential knowledge of the Word of God and the Power of the Holy Spirit and his (Corinthian) Gifts while remembering that "the Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword." (This is the prophetic word for [a ministry organisation] to equip the people of God for these days). Our weapons are not flesh and blood but have the spiritual power to tear down their sophistries. In effect, the Lord is calling us to actualize Ephesians 6:10–18 "10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. 13 Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place. 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people." The key to activate this, and indeed the whole Church, is the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God with no compromise no matter the cost since it is only the Truth that can set us free. Remembering too that "we are more than conquerors" should strengthen and encourage us as we move on into the future. [ - ].

That the Shepherds of the Church, that is, cardinals, archbishop, bishops, priests and all Religious Orders teach and lead by example the 'living' faith. Pope Francis is a good example of the living faith—he lives simply, no fancy robes, no fancy cars, humble quarters, humble living. Seminarians should be taught public-speaking so that they can present homilies that are inspiring and relevant to the gospel of the day. They should also be taught how to be approachable to their parishioners. Priests tell us to smile when we meet a person and yet they don't smile. The Catholic Education has to be thoroughly reviewed—I understand that there are teachers teaching Religious Studies in school without knowing the Catholic religion themselves and some of them are not even practising their faith. The Church desperately need to evangelise as the world is becoming more and more pagan —there is no practise in God—and great target for Satan who has succeeded in making the world believe there is no hell.

God is asking us to pressure the Australian Catholic hierarchy to: \* show some social presence \* make statements on matters of interest \* not be invisible to the public virtually all of the time \* stop clergy every week raking over the content of the Sunday readings \* instead tell the clergy to actually tell parishioners the way the Church is relevant to them today \* mostly what the clergy/hierarchy pass out on Sunday at sermon time is just old, tired re-statements of readings \* tell Catholics relevant stuff about how to live in today's world with a Catholic emphasis \* tell Catholics—Are there any Holy Days of Obligation remaining? Is there any mortal sin anymore? Is there any hell anymore?

Are parents supposed to send their children to Catholic schools? Can divorced people be married in the Church? Can divorced people be married at nuptial Mass? Do Catholic schools tell students they should go to Mass on Sundays? If they do, then students don't listen? If there is mortal sin anymore, then what transgressions come within that ambit? Does venial sin exist anymore? If it does, what constitutes venial sin? Why persist with confession/reconciliation when 99% of Catholics have given up on it? Why doesn't the hierarchy insist on some consistency from their clergy—e.g. some priests do 2nd rite of reconciliation and other simply will NOT!!! Astonishing!!! Why can't the hierarchy insist that priests get out of their presbyteries and actually engage with current and past parishioners? All priests do nowadays is sit in their offices in front of their computer screen and design communion certificates and suchlike. Why does the Australian Catholic hierarchy never come out publicly to support Catholics???? Whenever Muslims are under criticism there is no shortage of mullahs having their supportive say. But with Catholics—not likely!!!! Never any support in the community for Catholics from the hierarchy. Why doesn't the Australian Catholic hierarchy do something about getting children back to Mass?? I live in a catchment area for three Catholic schools—two of them of major size—and there is just one or two (literally) students from the 2,800 enrolment who attend the local Church!!!! Why not do something about that hierarchy instead of pretending it is not happening? Why not train priests to understand that they are as much in the entertainment business as they are in the religious business and work out that they have to compete with the local sports clubs, etc. for the attendance of parents and children?? Why doesn't the Australian hierarchy do something about declining participation and attendance instead of setting up more and more committees and councils, etc.—social justice, Indigenous matters, etc. ad infinitum. That is not getting numbers back. It is just providing a means for self-satisfaction among the hierarchy. Australia Catholic hierarchy is totally out of touch with today's Catholicism as seen by Australian Catholics today.

1. Question: What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time? Answer: I believe that Jesus is calling us to return to him—the “Way, Truth and the Life”—as he came to establish the Kingdom or realm of God. This will happen through a renewed study of the Gospels (including the whole of the New Testament) in Basic Christian Community Groups. (NB 1960’s Liberation Theology in South American Countries). This was the teaching introduced in the Documents of Vatican II!—but Vatican II has never been fully implemented in most parts of Australia.

To change the rules of the Church for the better.

He is asking each of us to take up our cross and follow Him. It is a tough call. It always has been; today is no difference.

God is asking us to follow his laws.

God is asking us to have an Inclusive Church. Working alongside the Clergy at all levels of the Church will be lay people trained and experienced in leadership. These people, both women and men, would then form the future Governance of the Church. This would hopefully result in a new Model of Church of the baptised, not just a Church of the Ordained. Reference to Bishop Vincent Long speech.<https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/australian-bishop-urges-end-clericalism>.

God is asking us to make the Australian Catholic Senior Clergy accountable to Australian Catholics for their decisions following the Royal Commission and the Institutional Responses to Child Abuse published in August 2018 and in particular, Recommendation 16. 7. This would mean every person employed in every archdiocese is educated in Theology and upholds the documents of Vatican II. We would ask for the reinstatement and endorsement of the Third Rite of Reconciliation.

God is asking us to become more aware and open to the presence of God in and around us. It requires of us, what was required of Jesus, regular times of silent stilling prayer. So we can experience, what Jesus experienced, God’s intimate loving transforming presence.

God is asking us to stand together in a troubled world and to help those around us while strongly supporting Pope Francis’s vision of a Church of the poor and disadvantaged.

To have respect for each person. To be conformed in the Church and follow Mass. To be more prayerful. Young people need encouragement to be more involved. Stop being silent and on the

<p>sidelines. Act but keep it simple. Know our faith so we can share it with others. Trust that God will provide the help and the words needed to share our faith. We need to be healed to help the Church to heal.</p>
<p>My belief is that God is calling us to: Cultivate an intimate relationship with God through all the resources of our Catholic faith. To nurture Faith in every way, in myself, those in my circle, in local Church and in our world. To actively listen to the signs of our times, cultivate skills for such listening through Faith development and conversations about our own insights and understanding of the signs we read. To take my own responsibility for actions that are open to me, to encourage and facilitate efforts by parish. Local, national and universal Church to grown in awareness of God's action in our world. Continue to grow in knowledge of all the riches available to me and all Catholics and generously share that with others. To seek to articulate Church law in the language of love, respect and compassion, rather than in the languages of Law, politics, greed or other such languages. Work towards an inclusive, participative Church that is honest, just and treasures the unique dignity of every person. Work toward a culture where God our Creator and Redeemer is acknowledged and honoured; and humanity seeks Fullness of Life for all.</p>
<p>The Church in Australia needs to move with the times. Women should have a stronger roll all around in making decisions and taking part in the active rolls in the Church.</p>
<p>I think God is asking all Catholics and God-fearing people to organize ourselves into the Body of Christ as a cohesive, adoring, peaceful, worshipping group. For this to happen, we need to know what people need in their parishes and how to best draw on our people resources to provide the cohesive Body of Christ we long for. Many marginalized people come to Church seeking help financially and spiritually but find a parish priest too busy to talk to them. Parents come to a parish wanting to school their children. We could, as a Church, seek more acolytes, consecrated life participants, sub-deacons, deacons and assistant priests from our parishes by establishing a group specifically for this purpose. These groups would minister to marginalized people or seek guidance from seminaries or consecrated life people or schools to school children. Each parish would be better served by a St Vincent de Paul Conference ministering to the needs of the marginalized. Those wanting to be Eucharistic ministers, Adorers of the Blessed sacrament, participants in Consecrated Life, St Vincent de Paul conference members, women's auxiliary can ask the parish Chairperson or a Catenian Associate member (rather than the parish priest who has his own specific duties). Everyone can be multi-skilled to rotate through all the duties of a parish, e.g. 1. A man can supply/arrange flowers on the altar, e.g. 2. A woman can be an acolyte. Poorer people would be mostly encouraged for these duties. We simply need a point of contact person who is a member of our Catenian City of [ - ] Association who will report to our monthly meetings on those interested in or in need of assistance spiritually or in some way needy. Our City of [ - ] Circle would create a position of Plenary Council Contact Officer at the parish level. The Plenary Council Contact Officer from the parish would report on parish needs to our monthly Catenian meeting. Each parish would be represented by a Catenian at the circle meeting who would put forward the activities in their parish area needing assistance e.g. a need for more acolytes/sub-deacons/Eucharistic ministers/St Vincent de Paul Conference members and these would be created. One parish would fill the needs of other parishes which are represented by Catenians at the monthly meeting. Parishes would need to be run more like a corporate organization responsible ultimately to an ongoing parish Plenary Council. The Plenary Council member from the parish reporting to the Catenian monthly meeting and the Catenian member reporting back to the parish. They can be one in the same person.</p>
<p>To be humble in response to acknowledging the wrongs of the past. Have a will to openly respond to change. Be prepared to sacrifice the old for the new. E.g.: Mass changes, Changes to the priesthood, and changes in Liturgy.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church in Australia (and in many Western countries) has lost the sense of her true identity in Jesus Christ by focusing more on a political and sociological agenda i.e. we have lost focus of who we are and our mission of preaching the Gospel. The Church needs to become serious about sin and not be ashamed of preaching it for it is only in the context of our sin that we can reclaim the</p>

preaching of the Gospel of salvation. We also need to reclaim our identity as Catholics by celebrating as Catholics. This means restoring the disciplines of Friday fasting as well as the Holy Days of Obligation. Without these, the Church in Australia has become spiritually lazy and largely irrelevant.

"Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Mt. 5:48 The 'mission' of every Christian has always been to live a life that is obviously shaped by one's personal encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. The first Christians were able to say and tell others "that we have heard, and we have seen with our own eyes: that we have watched and touched with our hands: the Word, who is life." (1Jn. 1:1b-1f) Yet this must be true also of us who live almost 2000 years after Christ ascended to His Father. Many of us were baptised into the Faith by the desire of our parents and as such our experiences and encounters with the Lord have occurred through the love of our parents and our interaction with the Church. It is thus of primary importance that we in the Church strive to present an authentic 'image' of the Lord and that this be consistent with the Church's practice since the early Christians. It is the same message we are proclaiming to the world—"Christ is Risen!" We encounter Christ primarily through His Church and thus her venerable and ancient customs, which are certainly proof of the continued guidance of the Holy Spirit, must not be confined to the past as something old and useless. "What was sacred to earlier generations cannot all of a sudden be considered to be harmful."—Summorum Pontificum. Development, sure; but not radical change or alteration. I believe it to be a false endeavour to seek to return the Church to identically mirror the life of the 'early Church', as this would reduce the action of the Holy Spirit throughout the centuries to merely cultural influences. So, what is God asking of the Church in Australia today? That we be holy, not by our own 'ingenious' methods but rather through the customs and practices that the Church has given us. This is not a personal faith in the sense that we make of it what we like. We belong to a community that extends even time; from the Apostles through to those who will witness the Lord's Second Coming. Scripture has not been given to us for personal interpretation but must be applied individually using the 'tools' given us by God through our holy mother, the Church (cf. 2Pt. 1:20-21). Our faith is personal in so far as we individually are to be united to Christ; but it's not about us! So, let us renounce ourselves, take up the cross and follow Christ (cf. Mk. 8:34-35). As we write this submission, it is the feast of the Epiphany, so let us take our example from the Magi and kneel before our infant King. "Christ has appeared to us; come let us adore Him" (from this morning's invitatory antiphon for the Office of Readings). Let us draw near to the Lord in the Blessed sacrament so that we can say along with St. John that we have heard, seen, watched and touched the Word who is Life (cf. 1Jn. 1:1b-1f)!

The Church in Australia has been floundering and losing followers for many years with numbers of the faithful decreasing. Youth, the future of our Church, are completely disillusioned and show no interest in attending Mass or participating in parish activities. This is not because they have no faith but because the Church has ignored them and they feel there is no meaningful place for them. Likewise, women have been taken for granted. While women make up the majority of active participants in our churches they have no active role in organisation or decision-making. Our Church is an institution run by clerics many of whom have no desire to embrace change. I think we are being asked to examine our Church in all its guises, to own its faults and shortcomings then to promote practices in ways that are relevant to our times. We are being asked to go back to basics, to build a Church of the faithful, a Church for the baptised, a Church that recognises and addresses the world and people of our time. As believers we are being asked to step up and to become more actively involved in our Church but with the current position of clericalism this cannot happen. The Church belongs to the baptised, and we as a body, need to be recognised and valued.

1. To share our love of God at home, Church, workplace and everywhere.
2. To recognise same sex relationships and marriage.
3. Give women the opportunity to join the Ministry and a say in how the Catholic Church operates.
4. Reconsider their views on Euthanasia.

I think God is asking of us to openly and honestly look at our present situation in the Catholic Church, to face our present predicament and as baptised people of God, we have the Holy Spirit to guide us

discern a way forward. (baptismal emphasis) In Australia, we have need for:

- \* Greater humility as regards the hierarchy, aware that their role is one of service, not power but empowering.
- \* Greater transparency, accountability and integrity at all levels
- \* Formation that engenders transformation of heart, especially for our youth.
- \* Greater involvement of women in Church Leadership also Women Deacons (as in early Church) Less male domination.
- \* Bible study/prayer groups.
- \* Use of Second Rite (Third?) of Reconciliation to bring people back to the sacrament.
- \* Church hierarchy accept responsibility for child abuse and cover up, apologise to victims and provide ongoing support to victims and family.
- \* A deep prayer life and discernment so as to restore trust.
- \* It's important that we be a listening people, a listening Church to the voice of the Holy Spirit for "With God, everything is possible" (Matt. 19:26).

To openly and honestly look at our present situation in the Catholic Church, to face our present predicament and as baptised people of God, the Holy Spirit will guide us discern a way forward. (baptismal emphasis)

- \* We have need for greater humility with the hierarchy aware that their role is one of service, not power but rather empowering so as to fulfil the Church's Mission, the Mission of Christ as proposed by the Gospels.
- \* Church hierarchy accept responsibility for child abuse and cover-up, apologise to victims and provide ongoing support to victims and family.
- \* Transparency, accountability and integrity at all levels.
- \* Formation that engenders transformation of heart, especially for our youth and in our seminaries.
- \* Greater involvement of women in Church Leadership positions, also Women Deacons. (as in early Church) resulting in less male domination.
- \* Use of Second Rite of Reconciliation in Church to bring people back to the sacrament.
- \* Bible prayer/study groups. The Charismatic Movement in the 1960's had a big impact on people's lives—had transforming effect, new life, joy and a love for Scripture and deeper prayer. Jesus said "Go out to all the world and proclaim the Good News to all Creation" (Mark 16:16) and was led mainly by lay people.
- \* A deep prayer life and discernment so as to restore trust.
- \* That we are a listening people, a listening Church to the voice of the Holy Spirit. "With God, everything is possible" (Matt. 19:26)
- \* We have a great need to be a celebrating Church and to enable all of us to appreciate the sacraments.
- \* Encourage Media, TV and Newspapers to impart 'Good News' Items rather than the constant negative reporting.

To turn back to Christ. To reform the Catholic Church so that young people such as myself have their religious and spiritual needs met in a local, safe, supportive environment with access to informed, sensible spiritual guidance. I shouldn't have to turn to the internet, or books, or travel to other cities or suburbs or towns when I want to talk to someone about Jesus or God or the Catholic Church. My local parish priest does not have enough time to address all my questions. God wants you to stop ignoring young adults and defining "Youth" as people who are adolescents. Stop being ageist. Reach out. Priests need to explain to people that they are normal, real people too. Simple things such as "That priest has an iPhone/goes to the gym/watches YouTube/reads Plato/ has done a course on public speaking/knows about how to manage bullying in a workplace" go a long way. I don't appreciate a priest telling me demons are rare when I know full well that there are demons in [ - ] too. Like my friends, I'm questioning because your Catholic school taught me to. My Catholic school education was actually not very good in teaching me how to continue being a good Christian outside

of school or when I left. Giving me a Catholic Bible was not enough. Stop ignoring me. Start reaching out to my friends via the social media they actually use and mainstream, commercial Australian Television (i.e. The Block). Let them know you've changed, let them know you want them back. Let them know that you are sorry, and that George Pell is sorry, and that everybody knows sex abuse is wrong and we're moving past it. Let people know that the Vatican decided ages ago that all religions are a pathway to God and that everybody should be respected (within reason). Make them hear you. Your churches are empty and there are very good reasons why. Teach Australians to listen, to pay attention, to be discerning. Even highly intelligent Australians can't understand the Catholic Bible. Let them know there are other versions and encourage them to read it, from front to back, in order, slowly in their own time, so they don't miss out. So they understand. So they don't have to rely solely on the priest. So they too can develop a personal relationship with God. So they don't need the media or Facebook or YouTube anymore. So they don't have to suffer like I am suffering. So they too, do not accidentally become "New Age" and invite the devil and/or demons into their houses or their lives. Sorry, guys, but you haven't been doing a very good job and still none of my friends will come to church with me. They think the weirdest thing I do is go to Catholic Mass on the weekend. They still won't come, even though it is only an hour a week. Can't even convince my husband (who is technically Anglican), or my father (a former Catholic school principal), or any of my Catholic friends to join me. Can only keep doing what I feel is right and hope that eventually they'll get sucked in too.

There were a number of issues raised at this session. See the attached document for details. Those issues included:

1. Women priests and a more active role for women in the hierarchy of the Church.
2. Youth and young adults and the relevance of Church for them today.
3. Tolerance of irregular marriages, including access to Holy Communion and being included in the parish life.
4. Spiritual renewal of the Clergy and laity from the bishop down.
5. Clericalism and its negative aspects on the Church. There is a need for clergy to be able to be married and they need a lot of support and education to become more pastoral.
6. Move into the 21st century—women priests, married priests, relevance of celibacy today. Church needs to reflect current society.
7. Exodus from parishes and the relevance of our faith in today's society.
8. Faith education in schools is sadly lacking especially in high schools where the focus is on being caring people rather than help students to learn more about their faith and to develop a spirituality. The lack of faith in teachers is reflecting in the students.
9. Evangelisation and outreach was another concern
10. Apologetics where the bishops stand up for the truths and protect our faith in the light of society's devaluing mores.

This is the response for the 3rd session at [parish]. Spiritual renewal and the Sunday obligation were import issues for this table. The competition with Sunday's sports, parental priorities, boredom (especially homilies) and a lack of purpose and reasons for fulfilling this obligation were seen as reasons people have stopped attending Mass regularly on Sundays. There was a request to make Adoration of the Blessed sacrament more available as well as opportunities to pray as a community. On the other hand, there were others who wanted to move from rules and obligations to relationship with God so that Sunday Masses were not obligatory, and those whose marriages had broken down but were not annulled could receive Communion. A call for tolerance and a non-judgemental attitude was made and a need to try to understand the neighbour and accept people for who they are and not what you want them to be. Again, the conservative sector of the Church is being criticised as ostracizing those who do not fit into their way of expressing their faith and alienating those whose worship is more tolerant. The intolerance of the Conservative Catholics was seen as keeping people from attending Mass and parish activities. There was a call for an acceptance of priests to marry couple in gardens or anywhere other than inside four walls. People listen

(believe) the media more than going to Mass to listen to the homily. We should not sacrifice the truth to be politically correct. The effect of the media on society and the view of what it means to be Catholic is a major concern. It appears that we have allowed media to walk all over Catholics and we are not given a voice. There was concern by a few that Church teaching on moral issues in society is being watered down and that there was a movement away from the traditions of the Church, becoming more liberal in mindset and ideology. Clericalism was a major point of discussion. "We the lay people need to know what's going on in the Church—we ought to know" was one statement which intimated that the laity want to be included in decision-making in the parishes and the wider Church. They are tired of priests being put on a pedestal. They are concerned that people with liberal agendas are finding their way into the Church hierarchy/governance. The questions of what Support for clergy was available and it was thought there was not enough support (practical support for their wellbeing, as well as support for teaching the truth of our faith). There was some concern that some members of the laity are overpowering leadership of the priests with their strong personalities. There was a call for spiritual guidance to be led by priests instead of lay people. They believe that there needs to be support for priests in teaching the faith and the truth of our faith. Practical support including continued spiritual formation is needed. Priests need to lead by being an authentic example of faith in action.

Theology was discussed. God created us to know him, to love him, to serve him. There is a need in the Church for devotion, adoration and return to Vatican II. We need to know God through adult faith formation and ongoing systematic catechesis. The identity of Catholic schools and Catholic universities needs to be addressed. Patriarchalism was another topic. Canon law is seen to rule over the Gospel. There needs to be more pastoral care in parishes. Parishes are becoming too big. The deacon is seen as pastoral but the priests are not. Clericalism was a big topic for discussion. The power of the Curia over local bishops' Conferences was a concern. Noisy liturgies as opposed to contemplative ones were a concern to some. Compromise the faults and mistake of Church leaders. They are not dealing adequately of those who are hurt by the Church. There is a lack of empathy and compassion to those who suffered abuse and ridicule by Church leaders. The discussion on Hierarchy of the Church including stating that clergy should be allowed to marry and the celibacy issue resolved. There appears to be insularity and arrogance of Catholicism in relationship to other Christian denominations. Women are still treated as second class and not allowed to be ordained priests. They should be able to be ordained. Society no longer has visible Christian values. The values of our faith are being challenged by civil rights and contemporary world. The Church is not engaging enough particularly those who lack intellect and communication skills. Many priests also do not have the intellect and communication skills needed to communicate well with their parishioners. There is a lack of enthusiasm in speaking out the truth and gospel teachings. Faith formation of adults are lacking due to being indifferent to the world's values and personal needs.

The session response is detailed in the attachment but included:

1. Clericalism is a very negative issue in the Church. The Church is in need of married priests and deacons.
2. Clergy accountability
3. Clergy skill sets need to be addressed as many are sadly lacking
4. Permanent deacons need to be fairly treated and there need to be a lot more of them. They are the pastoral face of the Church while priests are becoming more difficult to access.
5. Catechesis for teens, young adults and seniors. Also faith education for teachers and parents is needed.
6. There needs to be greater social dialog about the image of Catholics and the Church.
7. Possible different paradigm for parishes with administration delegated to those with the skills to do this.
8. Professional development for clergy is needed and should be compulsory. They need accreditation as in the business world in order to maintain the certified practicing status.
9. Role of women in leadership in the Church.

<p>Spread the gospel, help the homeless and fight for justice.</p>
<p>I think that the Holy Spirit God wants all lay people to be more committed and active in the activities of the Church.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us not to water down our Christian beliefs in order to appease atheists, secularists and people of other faiths just because we live in a multicultural society.</p>
<p>To change the Church from rules and restrictions to the most loving and life-giving responses. We all have been so hurt and deformed by these “rules”. In my understanding, Jesus did not deny any central rules (lots of unnecessary ones he did!) but in every encounter, He had the response was love and growth for the person. Somehow it has become twisted nowadays that rules are all important and encounters with the “Church” and its rules/laws leave people confused, hurt and disengaged and excluded. Why? Where is the love, healing and growth? There are so many hurt, angry “ex-Catholics”. Where do I start with the exclusion of women in the Church?????? No tokenism please. And it seems that the male clergy don’t even recognise the bias or pain! ...and the insult to our Creator for excluding 50% of his Plan. In the past I went to visit a friend and a priest answered the door. He told me that I was a woman and he did not want to be in the presence of a woman, and that I smelt of “Woman” and it made him want to vomit and to go away! Also, pronouncements from the bishops do not have much effect. The mess in the Church, especially the abuse scandals—and all the rest of the hidden scandals and hurt from past rules, laws and exclusions and power play, that has not been touched on by the public media and exposed yet, still festers in the community. Even though there is wisdom in some of these Statements, who will listen and why should they? Pronouncements from “on high” don’t work! We need humble leaders (and in fairness, I can think of three current Australian bishops, my own included, who are not Sanctimonious Power Enforcers) who can issue guidelines and then say. ... This is what Jesus taught, (note I did not say “this is a Church rule”) how can we help and support you and ourselves to live this way?” Statements about sharing our earth’s resources issued from bishop Palaces, overseas flights, expensive cars, etc. etc.....???? Can we please have a National week or month of National Repentance, Forgiveness and Healing. Hopefully this would gain a lot of publicity and reach all those very hurt, lost, angry, excluded, confused people—lay, religious and clergy. We are all in this together. NO ONE is untouched by this evil and pain. Only after such a cleansing and full public acknowledgement of wrong, forgiveness, healing and New Life in Jesus our Lord can we as a Church move on to a future? And one last point ... I LOVE and respect our dear Pope Francis. Indeed, we have been blessed with our Popes in modern times. But “The Church” is toooooo central and distant. Thank God at last we are starting to have a more collegiate Church as Francis is urging us to be. Finally, thank you, THANK YOU, to our Australian bishops who have initiated this Synod and allowing us to have a voice.</p>
<p>I think God is asking us to be forgiving and less selfish. At the same time, the Church MUST recognise the role of women and be more open to change. Or rather, make definite steps to change—NOW.</p>
<p>1. To learn to love and treat every person (incl. refugees and non-Australians) as we ourselves would like to be treated and love. 2. Spread the Good News 3. At all times, act as God wants us to act and give example by our behaviour. 4. Have Faith, courage and hope that our Lord loves us and only wants us to return to him. 5. We live in times when our Faith will be challenged. We need to pray to God for strength, courage, persistence and fortitude when this happens.</p>
<p>Open, honest communication and non-judgemental acceptance of different points of view. To grow in our faith by developing a deeper understanding of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. A willingness to engage and work things through rather than withdraw and "grumble". For the Church, for better guidance when making the readings and all things "Church" relevant to society today. To have forgiveness and courage for our priests to say sorry for past mistakes. For the Church to better understand the difficulties and challenges faced by the lay people.</p>
<p>God wants his Church, the world over, to defend his Word and doctrine as handed down to us from the apostles. The current members of the Church need to uphold Catholic doctrine in the face of a hedonistic and material world rather than attempt to conform to the popular desires of the world (i.e. same sex marriage, communion for the divorced and remarried, acceptance of contraception,</p>

abortion and euthanasia). All of these are evils in God's sight. Not even the Pope can change doctrine (although it seems he is trying to do so with 'innovative' language—*Amoris laetitia*, various pronouncements during his homilies and various synodal documents). The truth will always be the truth and it is not determined by popular consensus. Hence, I have my doubts about the true motivations behind the plenary council 2020. As per Hebrews 13:8–9, "Jesus Christ is the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be for ever". Do not be led astray by all sorts of strange doctrines: it is better to rely on grace for inner strength than on food, which has done no good to those who concentrate on it." Furthermore, any attempts to alter the liturgy of the Eucharist so as to welcome Protestants, who do not believe that Jesus is truly present at the consecration, would be an act of heresy. This would be a false ecumenism. Bishops and priests in Australia must not act or preach to be popular so as to fill the pews, nay, it is far better to hurt with the truth rather than to comfort with a lie. The Church needs to stop emptying both Mass and religious belief of the spiritual. I can't remember the last time I heard a priest talk about the reality of Satan and Hell. Unfortunately, it would seem that too many priests have been born and bred on the theology of Hans Urs von Balthasar which promotes a 'feel good message' about God's infinite mercy (whilst ignoring the concomitant requirement for 'a change of heart' or else suffering the reality of divine justice). The reality of a multitude of souls being in Hell is supported by Jesus' own words as well as the Church approved messages given to the children at Fatima as well as the theology of other doctors of the Church. When are we going to hear truthful theology from the pulpit rather than the burgeoning diet of 'touchy, feel good theology'? After all, without a keen knowledge of what is sinful, there cannot be a true knowledge of the need for a change of heart and without that, there is very little hope of salvation. In summary, the Church in Australia is being called upon to defend mother Church and her sacred doctrine from modernism and its many innovations and to instead, imbue a healthy spiritual awareness of the soul such that the Church's members focus on eternity rather than the worldly. Of course, the homosexual rot within the hierarchy must be dealt with as a matter of priority; otherwise neither of the aforementioned goals will be possible.

The first thing I believe that the Spirit is asking of the Australian Church is that we LISTEN—listen to the victims of sexual abuse by Clergy and Religious. This abuse is of epic proportions. It has happened in many countries not just here. It is systemic and demands radical solutions. Yet many bishops, priests and laity are still in DENIAL in spite of the monstrous crimes, and the trauma suffered by victims and the harm done to the Body of Christ. This is not simply about certain paedophiles infiltrating the Church. It is above all about the abuse of power and authority which led to the cover-ups and lies. It is about denying laity their rightful place in the Church which stems from their baptism. The ordained ministers have a stranglehold on decision-making. Women and men have been denied leadership roles of real significance. This is diametrically opposed to the practice of Jesus. He came to SERVE. He refused to dominate. He listened especially to the marginalized. He entered into the pain of their situations. How can we today create a Church which at every level walks with the laity in the ambiguity and complexity of their lives? What structures do we need to create to enable ordinary Catholics to discover and express their charisms and gifts of the Spirit? Share their difficulties and their Kairos moments in living out their discipleship at home, in their workplace, in their local community? How do we acknowledge and respect the qualifications, the life experience, and the wisdom of the laity? In particular we must find a way to hear the voice of women. They played a significant role in the life of Jesus and in that of the early Christian communities. And this was in a strongly patriarchal society where women were regarded as inferior. Today in democratic societies we recognize the equality of women and men. How can we not do so in the Church? How can we exclude women from not only the diaconate but priesthood itself? How can we not have them participate in parish pastoral teams, diocesan pastoral councils, hear their voice at National Bishops conferences. The Australian Church must become one which is truly inclusive welcoming all who are committed to being disciples of Christ. Pope Francis spoke of the cancer of clericalism. We clergy have tended to see ourselves as an elite species who have been ordained to run the Church and make all the major decisions, to be in a sense above the laity whose

role was to pray, pay and obey. This has led tragically to bishops, clergy, Religious who were not accountable to the communities they served, even seeing themselves as above the law. The great challenge for the Australian Church is to form and nurture a Church that is truly accountable and transparent, one that is open to all the faithful including the marginalized e.g. those divorced and remarried, gays and lesbians, etc. A related issue is allowing priests to opt to be celibate or married as was the case for half of the Church's history.

Hello Plenary Council 2020 Last century I put Apologetics before the Catholic Education Office with which to front years 11 and 12 students in Catholic schools but were rejected by that Office—when Catholic school students were dropping out of Sunday Masses soon after leaving those schools—whereas now they stop going to Mass way, way before they finish their Catholic educations ... so Plenary Council—worth another go? And the Education Office response to my suggestion as witnessed by both [ - ] and [ - ] back then was: "[ - ] you've got to understand that being a Catholic doesn't involve going to Mass." Since then, I've wandered through the reality of what monkeys have done for the millions of years with their four hands and eight fingers with two thumbs—me having learnt the reality of two tradies working together instead of just one working alone that pretty much quadruples the workload result instead of just doubling it—as a known fact by younger son [ - ] (B. 1978) who is a rigger. Four hands—still naked—still eating uncooked food—never making anything—just living in trees? But hey—a few of them "naturally selected" evolving into tower building, car making, plane flying astronauts? Of course...!! Yours faithfully [ - ] [ - ]

As the object of the eye is light, the ear sound, the skin touch, the tongue taste and the nose smell, what then is the object of the mind? Answer: Truth! As was said more than a millennium ago, God is Truth.

To be a more listening and responding Church. For the Church to become more relevant to our daily lives in Australia in 2019. Less Clericalism and more involvement of women in the Church. To repeal Humanae Vitae encyclical and allow other forms of birth control as this damages married life, especially when spouses are working FIFO. Reform the Religious Education curriculum to be more relevant to daily ways of following Christ, who said follow me. Less emphasis on laws and morality and more emphasis on living in a Christian manner.

1. for the Church leaders to be more supportive of the good clergy. The proven predators only represent a small fraction of priests, and brothers, yet the entire Church is labelled. These leaders should speak more openly to the media in support of these good people; it will also encourage more young people to recognise their vocations instead of being frightened off. If 90–97% are innocent of crime against children, should they not be praised openly? The few should be branded, NOT the entire Church. Children who make their first Holy Communion, then their Confirmation, should be followed up through their parents to practise their faith on a regular basis, through attending Mass, and receiving communion. I have been in 4 parishes in the last 10 years, and my guess is only 10% of children who receive these sacraments for the first time, never or close to never attend Mass regularly, or not at all. I believe that missions are no longer held in most parishes, and this soft approach seems to make people think less of God, and the last day of Judgement. I think the Church think if people attend Mass at Easter, and Christmas, that is OK, but what is the follow up of these once or twice a year Catholics? I think it is wonderful to have priests from all over the world BUT they need, in a lot of cases, to speak English more clearly to understand their sermons. I think the Church has to be open and honest as to what is happening in all areas, good or bad.

There are powerful philosophical and social dynamics shaping the culture of today compared with previous eras. Globalisation and the use of the internet have made communication of ideologies much easier today. Secular and materialistic views appear to have succeeded in pulling the faithful— young and old—away from the faith. I think the Church in Australia is being called to take greater care to ensure that our children are taught the arguments for the faith as well as the experience of God, and not just the rubrics of faith. Our children need to be suitably prepared to be able to give a defence of the hope within them. They learn complex subjects such as Calculus, Shakespeare and

science, and yet, they miss critical apologetics and philosophical arguments, such as Aquinas' proof of God's existence. These arguments are critical in shielding our children from being taken in by incoherent and illogical attacks by the modern anti-religion zealots. To help in this area, I think God is calling the Church to adopt modern means of evangelisation the world, taking advantage of the technology at our disposal (web, social media, YouTube, and television). I also think that the Church is being called to be more diligent in the appointment of faithful Catholics as teachers of the faith in Catholic schools. As my experience below shows, some teachers, who are called to form our children's faith, are not suitable because they do not have the faith themselves. This increases the chance of improper catechises and lose of their faith. I believe that the finding of the Gonski review regarding teacher quality is just as applicable to the Catholic teaching of RE as in any other subject. I also think God requires the clergy to stand firm in the traditions of the Church and be willing to preach it from the pulpit. Recently, I was impressed when our priest spoke up against the euthanasia bill because this is an uncommon occurrence. Typically, the clergy of today appear reluctant to speak of anything Catholic in case it may offend parishioners. I think this is a mistake because Christ himself called people to change their ways. Today, we receive very little cautioning in Church and sermons are watered down for the lowest common denominator. I sometimes feel that we receive the same kind of teaching as the secular motivational speakers that I listen to on the internet. The clergy should call us to conversion from the pulpit, not convince us to feel like 'you're okay and I'm okay.'" We receive this message all the time from the secular world.

Get in touch with the REAL world. The clerical Church is so out of touch with where the people of God are.

That the Catholic Church become relevant again to the people of Australia so that the message of Christ can be heard by the people. To do this, the Church must evolve, become a contemporary, inclusive, listening and compassionate Church. It must ask itself, what would Christ want, do [and] say if he were here. Christ was inclusive: he was not bound by tradition, which had no meaning to his message, nor should the contemporary Church. The Church must come back to basics—not define people on basis of gender, sexuality, race, etc. We must preach the gospel: not by rules invented by man. We must embrace and become relevant to our young people—at present we have alienated at least two generations young Australians by failing to faithfully follow Christ's teaching. Like the Pharisees, the Church has become concerned with adherence to the letter of the law (as written by man) not the spirit of the law, as given by God. Unless the Catholic Church has a new revolution of love, a return to the real values of Christ, it will become an anachronism, which has not meaning in contemporary Australian society (which sadly is almost what it is now). With this council, we have an opportunity to change and reinvigorate. My concern is, that the majority of Catholics in Australia will not contribute to this commentary, as they have already been marginalised by the Church in the behaviours of the past years, with a retreat into pre-Vatican council ways, failure to listen to the needs of the modern world, failure to respond in a positive way to the evolution of the modern world in Australia. The Catholic Church of my youth, in the 60s was a vibrant Church, invigorated by the second Vatican council, with local clergy, and religious, in the schools, in the parishes, leading the way, teaching in the spirit of Christ. Most of these young religious left their vocations because of disillusionment with the Church failing to deliver on the second Vatican council. These young people would now be leading the Australian Church as clergy, bishops. We lost a generation. Those that remained were more cautious, more conservative. The Church's message to our young people became increasingly irrelevant to them. Perhaps our Australian Church would be in a different position now had these people, these enthusiastic clergy and religious, not left. Personally, I continue to practice my faith which was nurtured by my parents and the wonderful example and inspiration of my teachers in the 1960s who showed me what the Church was and should be, and what God wanted for the world, what Christianity meant. My younger relatives never had (and do not have) the experience I had. They have left the Church, in summary I hope this. Council will embrace the spirit of Christ's teaching and renew. I believe God wants the Church to become a

listening. Inclusive, contemporary, and innovative Church that brings the teaching of Christ back into contemporary Australian society.

I think he is asking us to move back to Jesus. To look at our faith in the context of 2019. As Jesus spoke about the faith in the Context of his times. I think we need as a Church start to listen with compassion. I think we need to leave God to do the judging.

The Plenary Question for my parish of [ - ]/[ - ] was: What do you love about being Catholic? Responses are: - A sense of belonging to the true faith and the companionship this brings. - The opportunity for worship. - Being Catholic when I was travelling, we could go to Mass wheresoever we were and join together even if it was another language. - Sharing in the same spirit, sacraments, beliefs, readings, prayers. - Community and support - Spiritual nourishment—if provided a good sermon. - Sacraments - Code for living a good life. - Prayer life emphasised. - Enrichment by ceremonies, baptism, Wedding, etc., Easter, Christmas, Funerals. - Various support groups one can join. - Have thought about this often during my adult years. My Catholic experience has changed, particularly having experienced being Catholic both pre and post Vatican II. These days I see myself as a Christian of the Catholic variety. - I have a burden lifted off me. - I feel that I have God to lean on and to guide me in everything that I do. - I believe in God's plan for me—which makes the acceptance of the difficult situations I encounter easier. - I get peace when I pray. - I love the sharing and giving of the Catholic community and the community in my parish. - With the teachings, I feel I am growing as a person to be more compassionate of others. - It helps me to learn patience and I am calmer as a person. - I am happy. - Part of community, sharing same values. - Being Catholic defines me. - More freedom of thought than perhaps other religions. - The faith I have lends itself to the Catholic ethos. Still feel I can be a Catholic even if I do not quite agree with all teachings. - Receive sacraments since birth. - Guardian Angels walk beside me. - Wherever I am and whenever I want to talk to God, He is always present to talk to me and listen to me. - Empower me to do good at all times to help, support, and advise others in need. - Listen to Mass/Gospel to strengthen my soul in daily challenges. - Sharing, giving to others just like Our Heavenly Mother did. - Follow Jesus' passion through his earthly pilgrimage from birth to his crucifixion. - The way we celebrate Mass - Advent, Lent. - The way we dress the Church. - Knowledge that the truth of God is faithfully passed on through the generations. - Our Holy Father the Pope - A sacred line from Peter the rock. - The rich tradition of the Church, Prophets, Saints, Buildings. - Our priests and religious. - Religious sites. - Sacraments - Access to Jesus. - Jesus instituted the Holy Eucharist and it is because of Him we have the sacraments. - Mother Mary—Her role is crucial to a relationship with Jesus and God the Father.

Session 6 This session group saw a desire for an increased sense of community including a need to reach out to the lost and isolated and marginalised. They saw a missionary call of the laity for evangelisation. They look forward to a more engaging Church—involving its people in dialogue on issues that affect us all in daily life. A concern for the youth involvement in the Church with face-to-face consultation of the youth in matters that affect the Church and society. They suggested a Church that gives young people opportunities to dialogue at Sunday Mass so that Mass becomes a conversation as well as a sacrament. They look for a more bonded community engaging our youth. There was a suggestion that we recapture reverence in the liturgical worship. A high priority suggestion was for Catholic Education requiring faith formation and catechism for Catholics in the truths of the Church. To do away with enforced study of RE in Catholic schools instead focusing of paying for trained catechists to teach and mentor our RE classes as many of the teachers don't practice the faith so how can they impart the faith to others. They are looking for more opportunities to engage our young in programs that are stimulating, motivational, inspirational and fun. They believe that parents who want to enrol their children in Catholic schools should understand the value of their faith—the Church needs to help families understand this. It was suggested there be catechism for baptised Catholics. They want Bible based programmes where faith formation leads to growth. Regarding the clergy they would like to see preaching skills improved with formation for clergy in many aspects of their ministry. Clergy who give homilies need to be trained in public speaking that that the 10 minutes given to homilies is used effectively.

Communication skills also need improvement. The priests and deacons need support from the bishops. They believed that preaching could be using more various forms of media (TV, radio networks, e.g. EWTN). The roles of clergy and relationships within the Church needs to be considered. The deacon in our parish delivers good homilies but rarely has an opportunity to give them. On those Sundays relating to marriage (e.g. Feast of Cana, Wedding Anniversary Masses, etc.) it is usually the priest who gives the homily. Those clergy with the best skills of homiletics or experience of married life should be given the opportunity to deliver the homily. It would be great to have more deacons in parishes.

For full details see the attachment. Summary:

1. Need to be more inclusive of divorced people, and youth
2. The conservative elements are turning people away from the Church
3. The Church should provide better curriculum in high schools for youth to explore themselves.
4. Ecumenism and working with other Christian groups.
5. Accountability—senior authorities need to be trained to manage people, transparency to the wider community.
6. Need for married priests, female deacons, female priests.
7. Support for clergy to carry out their ministry is inconsistent. Ongoing formation of clergy is necessary. Communication and homiletic skills are sadly lacking. They are not people managers and needs skills in managing staff and volunteers. Mentoring of clergy is needed.
8. Seminary training has focused on theology to the detriment of life skills and people management skills, financial management, etc.
9. Gifts and talents of clergy should be considered when appointing them to parishes, etc.
10. Church in society—the Church needs to look at its branding and image in society.

See attachment for details:

1. Catholic education is in crisis and needs an improved curriculum.
2. Acceptance of people who are different e.g. same sex marriage, etc.
3. What are other Christian churches/communities doing that attract people while the Catholic Church is losing people?
4. Trained laity have no role in the Church and should be given more opportunities to minister.
5. Outreach and evangelisation needs to reach out to the minorities and vulnerable.
6. The Church is seen as full of rules and sins and needs kindness and forgiveness when making laws relating to marriage etc.
7. There needs to be more women involvement in the Church as either deacons or priests or in the hierarchy of the Church.
8. Clericalism was a major concern of this group. Priests need to be more pastoral and give mentoring and assistance to minister with compassion.
9. An increase in the number of priests was a concern and ways to do this was considered (married priests, more deacons, female priests and deacons, or even cardinals).
10. Catholic identity was another issue so society could rebuild trust in the clergy and people who call themselves Catholic.
11. Flexibility of the sacraments (especially marriage) needs to be improved so that more people can receive this sacrament, and also so that divorced can receive the sacrament of Eucharist.
12. A more proactive approach to retaining the youth in the Church is needed.

See attachment for details:

1. Evangelisation through inclusivity being seen to practice our faith and through friendship.
2. Catechesis: God is asking all adults and children to learn more about Him.
3. Sacraments.
4. Catholic identity: Ensure past mistakes are not repeated. Take a public voice on issues of public interest.
5. Clericalism/Clerics: The bishops need to review management structure of the Church. Authority of Church—too much is given to Rome. We need to have it at country level. Decisions need to be more

independent. Priesthood needs to change. Married and women priests should be allowed. This allows more community building with more leadership. Priesthood—to encourage more priests and ensure that they have the relevant attributes. Do we screen the, allow married or women priests? If so how? If not why? Eradication of clericalism and its elitism. Allow bishops and clergy a greater voice—access avenue from congregation. Authority structure based on that of the Anglican Communion. Smaller parishes and this will be possible with married and women priests. Allows priests to marry. A Church that welcomes women to full ordination as deacons and priests. Making the Church relevant in the Church in the next century for families, clergy and youth.

6. Family: How do we instil Christian values into a family to make it Christ-centred? How do their education/growth continue as they grow through adolescence?

7. We need a more contemplative Church. A more informed Church—both priests and laity of Church history, scripture, exegesis and theology. Religious instruction to be taught at Catholic schools made more interesting and compulsory, that moral values are important. Call on truth in everyday life.

8. Faith community to build a community that supports each other and nurtures the new believers, how do we:

1) strengthen the connectivity and relationship of its members?

2) provide avenues to strengthen this?

3) ensure that new believers are sustained in the faith?

9. The Church needs to promote Catholic standards outside of congregation—Influence.

10. Inclusivity: A Church that welcomes LGBTI members—not judge and condemn them as ‘sinful’ or ‘un-natural’. A Church that is not arrogant in its attitudes and relationship with other Christian denominations.

Parents are good examples for their children. They love and help their children to believe in God because children will grow and become good or bad depending their parents educate them and increase their children’ faith. People need pray always because prayer will open them to receive God’ Graces in their lives. Even though they face many challenges and troubles but prayer will help them overcome their sufferings. Devotional practices need to be encouraged, such as reading the Bible every day. This best happens in the early morning when they wake up because they will be busy all day and won’t have time to read during daytime. Through such prayer, parents have experience of God and about how to live the Gospel. In turn they can help their children read the Bible. As Christians, they need to be encouraged to form daily habits to make their faith real. Daily life calls people to forgive and to be humble. Small aspirations can promote faith such as “Lord have mercy on me and on our children and grandchildren.” Grandparents need to spend time for grandchildren because parents are very busy earning money. Grandparents can pass on faith by teaching children to say the “Our Father”, the Rosary and prayers like the Divine Mercy prayer. Little practices like making the Sign of the Cross and saying “Hail Mary” every time they set out in the car, can help.

All Australians Living and Working Together. I imagine God may want all Australians to live together in harmony and cooperate to make our country a better place for all. This includes: § Catholics (observant and non-observant), other Christians, Hindus, Muslims, all religious people and those who profess no religion. § Women, men, old and young, people of all nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. § All people whatever their level of education, personality and interests § Rich, just comfortable and poor; § Married, single, divorced, straight, lesbian, gay or any marital status or orientation § Healthy, sick, intellectually or physically challenged § All other groups that I can’t think of at the moment. Working together for what? We can assume there is a general if somewhat vague consensus on this: furthering the Kingdom of God by establishing justice, peace, harmony and a decent life for all. The plenary council is a Catholic event, so naturally the emphasis is on how can we in the Catholic community contribute? Three basic premises for achieving something really worthwhile are: 1. The most recent attempt to engage the hopes, fears and aspirations of the universal Church was the ecumenical council in the 1960s. Although only the top of the hierarchy

<p>was actively involved, it was the closest we have to a universal council. The first decision of Australia's plenary council must be to reiterate. ACCEPTANCE OF THE DECISIONS AND OVERALL SPIRIT OF THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL understood in the light of our 50 years' experience since then. This involves a firm acceptance of the role of the People of God and a readiness to heed the signs of the times. 2. We are living in a world with deep and often bitter divisions. We are living in a Church with deep and often bitter divisions. Catholics emphasise purity of doctrine and traditional practices and structures; Catholics emphasise human rights, tolerance and a willingness to change. Each tendency must accept the other as a legitimate expression of the Christian faith. I suspect God may want substantial renewal but CHANGES MUST HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE WIDE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY. 3. The LAITY, especially women and young people, must be INVOLVED NOW from the very start of the synod. It will require much patience, tolerance and a lot of fancy footwork to adhere to these three basic requirements. Ideally, we would like the plenary council to come up with wise and practical enactments and useful new structures. In practice, it may be sufficient simply to ensure we are heading in the right direction, with wide support and useful tools. I suggest: § The creation of structures with majority membership of laity from all groups and shades of opinion to seriously investigate the examination and execution of suggestions proposed. § The council is an ongoing process; Pentecost 2021 is not the end; progress must be monitored with continuous feedback from all; debate and renewal must continue towards a 2030 synod.</p>
<p>To receive forgiveness for the sins of the past of Church members who have sexually abused others, particularly children. This should be done by a national day of reparation.</p>
<p>To Be the Face of Christ—to love people without judgement.</p>
<p>He is asking us to pray first then to suggest that the Church improves the way it communicates with its members. There needs to be more adult education in faith, development of smaller "Church" groups such as Christian Family Life (now defunct in [ - ]), Couples for Christ (a Filipino program, etc.) etc. Life in Christ has to extend beyond Sunday Mass and the Church community has to come together in smaller groups to reinforce their faith.</p>
<p>God is asking Australia to be strong and resolute in our Christian faith. To nourish and educate and live and thrive in our Christian faith.</p>
<p>To develop our faith and to live our lives in a way so that our actions align with our beliefs and values. To build up our faith community and to nurture our faith and morals and traditions. To engage with the wider community in dialogue for the common good. To promote and utilise Catholic Social Teaching, Pastoral Care and Charity within the wider Australian community.</p>
<p>What do I think God is asking of us in Australia heading to 2020 and beyond? Perspective: The Last 100 years, global society has been driven to centralisation—toward world government under a New World Order deception. To achieve the New Order it is necessary to destroy the Family structure and the Catholic Church. Both the Family and Church are thus in continuous progressive decline. Centralisation after one hundred years is now in reverse, and both the laity and Church have to change. Under such perspective, what is God asking? Reverse the 100 years' push, of centralisation by reinforcing the institutions of Family community and Church, and get people especially young people meaningfully connect with God. To achieve this result, Laity and Church must do things differently: 1. Continue the current new reversal trend of DECENTRALISATION by promoting BACK TO THE VILLAGE TYPE COMMUNITY, when and wherever possible. 2. A number of parishes may join and cooperate to create an "Agri-hood" type communities on available Catholic land and on associated Catholic orders' land such as Christian brothers, Salinas, etc. 3. The Church must support and help with the sourcing, planning funding and generally promote Acquisition or use of suitable Properties. 4. This spirit-connected "Village" to become the most important intermediate body between the Family and the State. These independent Village type communities will reside, work, play and educate their children based on a philosophy of—back to God, the Gospels and the Church via the Family Unit. We will see the spirit of the Family mirrored in communities, the suburbs, the cities and the State. These intermediate bodies between the Family and the State will then be open to the temperate spirit of the Family, which radiates out its benevolent influences. This same Family spirit</p>

will have a capacity to absorb and integrate that everyone in a region eventually share a family like mentality, temperament and affection, with a real ongoing connection to God , the sacraments and the Church. We in this wonderful country may really become “Australia del Espiritu Santo.”
We believe that God is asking us to have the hierarchy of the Church as open, transparent and honest about dealings/issues regarding the Church. We want leaders to be accountable. Jesus was inclusive of all women, we expect the Church to do the same. God is asking that we move forward, so priests can marry and women can become priests. God is asking the Church to work at grass roots level, seeing individuals, not a collection.
To be more open, outreaching, proactive.
Boldly defend the perennial truths of our holy Catholic Church, particularly regarding gender ideology and the sanctity of marriage
To evangelise and be strong and courageous in doing so. With moral ideologies in the country deteriorating, as evidenced by recent legislations such as abortion, RU486, same sex marriage and now the push towards euthanasia, I believe that God is asking our clergy to preach the Catholic position at the pulpit with regards to such issues as I find that many Catholics lack an understanding of why we believe what we believe. In the recent ‘same-sex marriage’ plebiscite, the Archbishop seemed like a lone voice defending the Catholic position. In my opinion, one of the reasons we were defeated was due to weakness of our clergy, who it seemed to me were more concerned about upsetting their parishioners then by carrying out the mission they were ordained for. In this mission, our Catholic school educators are also being asked to contribute by educating their students to understand Catholic beliefs. Similarly, I believe that God is asking our clergy and our school educators to teach the truth as Jesus did, with authority and courage. Warm fuzzy homilies do not inflame our hearts or keep the fire burning within it. Any fires brought about by such homilies are quickly extinguished and forgotten. Our Catholic faith is full of joyous mysteries, epiphany moments, deep spiritualism that holds us strong to this our faith that we would never want to leave it once its truths are revealed to us. However, some of these truths may offend a minority and as such our preachers water down our faith. I believe that God is asking us to evangelise as Jesus did, with courage and authority, to spread the truth, even though some of this truth may offend. I believe bishops should encourage their clergy to do this rather than to appease the vocal minority who object to these truths being preached because it offends them. In addition, evangelisation today has a powerful tool at its disposal in the form of electronic media such as the internet, You Tube, Twitter, Facebook etc. The Catholic evangelists in the U.S.A. are quite successful using these tools. I suggest that our Catholic evangelists in Australia be encouraged to do the same.
Increase faith and trust in God through building a strong Church that responds to the needs of parishioners through: 1/ Parish priest to organise and lead a detailed programme to study both Old and New Testament because ignorance of God's Word is ignorance of Christ. 2/ Understanding the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It seems that those who left the Church have one thing in common: they don't believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. 3/ Propagation of the adoration of the Blessed sacrament. 4/ Rosary group to say the rosary before or after Mass.
God wants us to evangelize and we start from when they are young ... through catechism. Churches should be fully equipped and ready for this ... meaning ... provide facilities and resources.
I believe God wants us to reconnect with our faith and continue to look to the Catholic way of life as a model for us to live by. It is important that the Catholic community becomes inclusive of all people and non-judgemental of people's lifestyles and choices. The Church needs to remain relevant, and present the teachings of the Catholic Church in a way that is relevant in today's Australian society. Mass needs to become engaging and a community-based event that draws people together.
God is asking us to think deeply with reason and love. We need to look at our Church and how we can make changes/improvements that will bring God's love into many people's lives.

<p>I believe that we need to develop a shared and agreed understanding of what relevance means to all Catholics. We need to hold fast the Gospel values and not let the majority of weak faith Catholics water down the expectations of all Catholics in particular to attend Mass weekly and receive the spiritual nourishment of the Holy Eucharist.</p>
<p>I think God is asking Is my Church relevant in modern society? Why can only single men be priest? Are my teachings relevant? My message might be but it is often in the hands of men who cannot express the message properly, appropriately and competently. Attending Church every Sunday does not make you a good Catholic it also does not make you a good person, attending Church can assist but with the right priest giving the right message. Too often this message is delivered inappropriately.</p>
<p>To be relevant to the world of today—Masses that inspire, include everybody. Positive. To be able to link school and parish. Our school does a wonderful initiative that we have a children Mass at 5.30 and Father makes it only 40 mins and the children are involved then we have a sausage sizzle afterwards. The Church is packed and it motivates families to want to return. The Sunday Mass is hard can there be other options/online that cater for everybody?</p>
<p>To tell the truth, to live with compassion and love and to pray.</p>
<p>God is asking us to be compassionate, kind and caring human beings. To be thankful for what we have and to help the marginalized. To live life doing good like Jesus.</p>
<p>God is asking us to set an example like Christ.</p>
<p>Move with the times. The Church needs to be current and relevant to today's society.</p>
<p>Being more inclusive and forgiving. Acknowledging past mistakes of the Church.</p>
<p>To be more open to education about changes in the world and the Catholic Church.</p>
<p>The Catholic faith needs to keep its values but change and be more accepting of the changing lifestyles we now live. Just because people go to Church every week does not make them a better Catholic than someone who may not go to Church each week yet lives a more God-centred life. It is more about how you live a God-centred life to others.</p>
<p>Why does Faith matter to Us? Faith matters to us because it helps you become a better person. It helps us recognise our true personality and traits. Faith is important to us because it enables us to believe in God and all that Jesus has revealed. It helps us connect with God and become closer to Him on a personal level. What are some of the big questions facing our youth today? For children in Australia, many questions face us every single day. Some major questions we ask ourselves are; what do we want to do with our future? What job do we want? How will we follow Jesus' examples to make a better life for ourselves and our community? If Jesus came to Australia today what would he want to see? - More churches and more people participating in the Church - Everyone has a sense of belonging in their community - People show respect and everyone is treated with equality - People follow the commandments and receive the sacraments.</p> <p>What do you think God and young people hope for the future of the Church? God and young people hope that the future of the Church grows and strengthens its relationship with the Holy Spirit, hope that the Church develops in such a way to create a special bond between God and future Catholic generations. God and young people want to see their family grow within the Church community and strive to go to church more often and be a more determined Catholic in the Church. God sent us humans to carry out the Catholic religion and to preach his word in his name. If you were to belong to a community of faith, what would interest you in belonging?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the people around you</li> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• God</li> <li>• To Worship</li> <li>• The Influence of</li> <li>• Developing a closer relationship with God</li> <li>• Feeling as if you were involved</li> <li>• Meeting new people</li> </ul>

- Feeling a part of a community
- Feeling a sense of belonging.

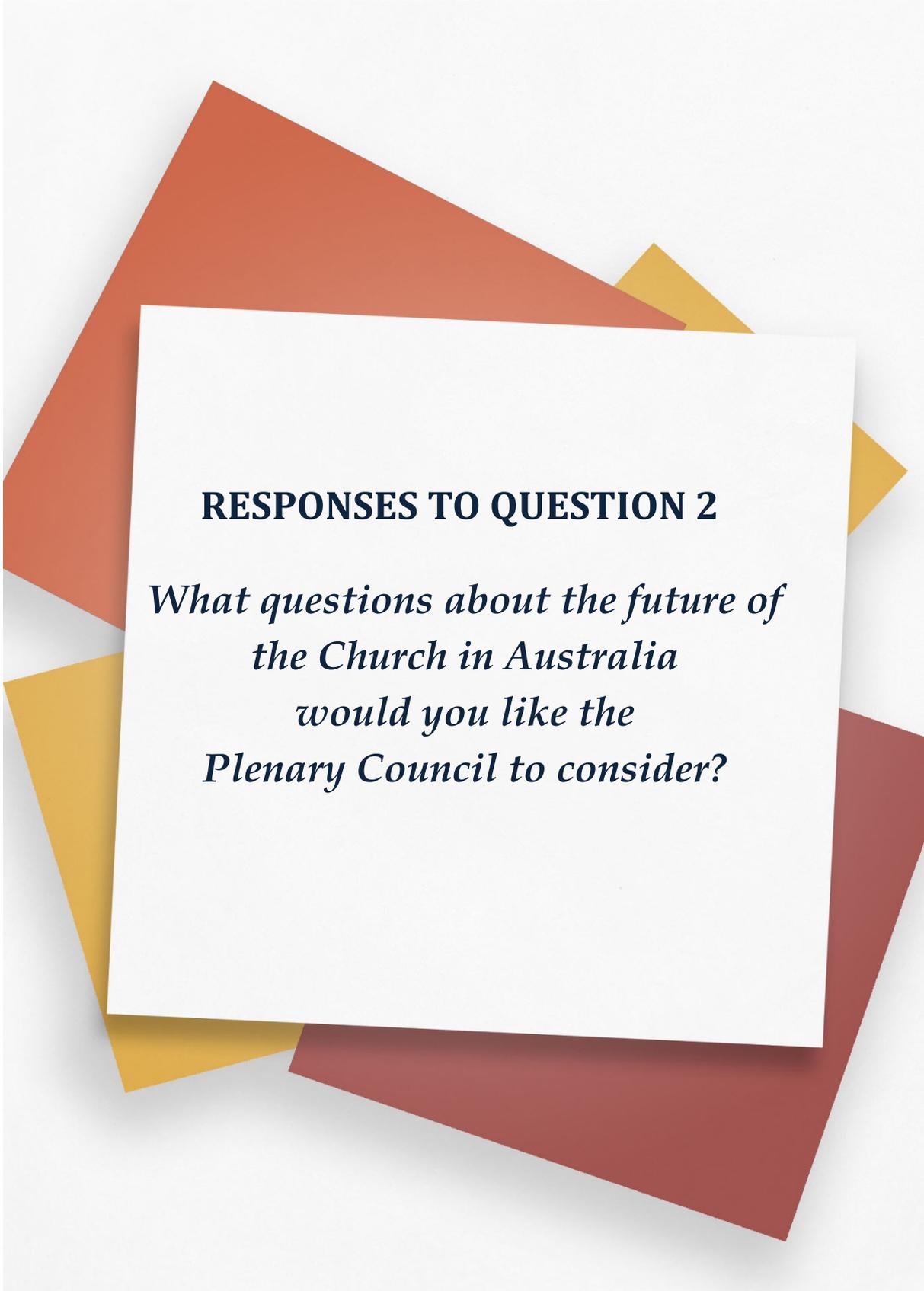
As Church, are we reaching out to those who are wounded and in need of healing?

I believe our Lord is asking what it means to be Catholic! The Catholic Christian faith should be influencing the culture, not be influenced by the culture which is what is happening, unfortunately. We need to remain Faithful to the perennial teachings of Jesus, and His Holy Church, and to worship Him in the Holy Mass reverently, and thus save our souls (and others by our good example). Jesus is merciful, Thanks be to God! However, he is also Just, and I believe a much better balance between Mercy and Justice needs to be shown, and taught in our Churches and schools! And it can be done evangelically! The Faith needs to influence every aspect of our lives, and we need Holy examples of Men and Women who are living the Gospel, which is both the 'nice' parts as well as the 'Hard' parts! We need some Jeremiah's, Ezekiel's and prophets from the pulpits that show us how to be Holy. It's not easy, and it's even harder when the world is bringing its 'false gospel' in regard to marriage, sexuality and it has infiltrated the Church in both the hierarchy and the laity, unfortunately! Standing up in the pulpits teaching the true faith, means that the Church will be smaller, but some souls will be saved, and that is the mission of the 'Church', to save souls. It is the responsibility of bishops, priests and Deacons to save souls first and foremost, and we have a great 'Cloud of Witnesses' in heaven urging us on to do this, even if we have to lose our lives literally or confessionally. Also, we need to significantly improve our Worship of Our Lord in the Eucharist. I believe it has become in many places too 'Protestant' or pandered to worldly sensibilities, to be too relevant to attract more people to Church. This is through poor liturgy, poor music and weak preaching. Faith comes from what is Heard (and seen). We need worship to be Holy, and in my view ideally going back to the Extraordinary Form, but particularly to have 'ad orientem' and kneeling in order to receive Our Lord Jesus in the Eucharist. Jesus is the 'Source and Summit' of our life, and how we worship Him will provide a Huge example to others to convert and come to know Jesus. We need better teaching and formation as Catholic. I've learnt almost all of the 'true' faith myself, books and online, etc., (Very little from the pulpit) and there are plenty of heterodox beliefs around about our faith. I believe, this along with poor liturgy, are the reason for the abandonment of the Catholic Faith since Vatican II. There are many who I fear the Lord will say 'Depart from me I never knew you'! So, in summary,

- 1) Improve Worship of Jesus God and the Holy Mass—Better Liturgy, Better Music. Ideally reverting, or increasing the Extraordinary Form Mass.
- 2) Improve Teaching on Key aspects of the Faith from Pulpits, so the faithful hear the Truth! This is to save souls. This should encourage the faithful to come to Know Jesus, through reading the Bible and frequent the sacraments, particularly confession.

Responses from [ - ] Mothers' Group. We feel that God is asking us to look at the following areas of concern. There will be many more, but the following are for us essential: Women's role in the Church needs to be expanded—feminine attributes are needed in the pastoral activities of all areas of the Church. The intellectual side and approach must obviously also be used, however, the disadvantaged, those whose dignity has been trampled on, etc. need carers or helpers who are more sensitive to the many needs they may have. A woman is more likely to have an eye out for the needs of those who come to Church and in their neighbourhood. Males and females have complimentary roles and therefore the governance of the Church needs to have the complimentary role of the female featuring in all areas—by this we do not mean women priests but rather women taking full responsibility in all areas of the Church with their particular gifts. Welcoming in the Church, particularly by the priests, but also by members of the congregation, needs to improve. People need to feel they belong. A story—after a year in a parish a woman who is a regular weekday Mass goer was not present on one day and the priest mentioned to her the next day that she had been missed. This was a very positive experience for the woman. No one had ever told her that she had been missed at Mass. In particular, concern was expressed about our multicultural Church. Our congregations are made up of people from various cultures who have grown up with different customs. It would be helpful if there were opportunities to explain to 'newcomers' how things are

done in Australia. On the other hand, the Australian Church also needs to be open to learn from other cultures. Formation—Adult faith formation is being offered but more advertising and personal encouragement is needed so that many more take advantage of these offers. Formation is not only needed in religious matters but also in modest dressing; respect for different races, ages, life in general etc. In other words, we have to learn again how to integrate our faith with our everyday lives. As far as modest dress is concerned here is an example of where female pastoral influence is important. Not only our young people but people of all ages need to be helped to see what is appropriate dress in various areas. Our society is so secular that unless there is proper formation, our younger generation will not have a sense for what is appropriate. They need to be understood where they are at but helped in a direction of proper respect for the dignity of each person and themselves. Collaboration with other Christian faiths ... acknowledge where Christ is in these Churches and work together wherever possible. We may not allow different expressions of faith cloud our working together as we try to live our Christian values.



## **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. Will you go back to traditional parishes that look like churches and away from modern eyesores?
2. Will you promote parishes to be more active in social welfare of its community rather than just providing coffee and cake after Mass to parishioners?
3. Are the bishops proclaiming the unaltered truth about God's Son, our Lord Jesus Christ in a way that remains faithful to tradition?
4. Will the Catholic Church provide more teaching and guidance around Australian Government proposals and policies?
5. Will the Catholic Church seek to employ more practicing Catholics in our schools, colleges and other educational facilities?
6. Will there ever be a consideration given to having married priests?
7. What are you doing to get people back to the sacraments?
8. Is religious education in Catholic school effective enough or should it be expanded with practical work or live-in monasteries, abbeys, or seminaries?
9. Should every diocese have regular admittance for permanent deacons and clear prerequisite and expectations of them?
10. Is the Church going to be soft with the government on euthanasia and homosexuality because of money for schools?
11. Does anyone have the right to prevent another person from attending Sunday Mass, or for that matter from entering a Catholic Church?
12. Is care being taken to ensure that excellent priests are in charge of seminaries, and forming the seminarians to be devout?
13. Can the Church re-examine the sources on the teaching about marriage?
14. Why doesn't the Church realise that if God is our creator then he must have created those who are different—people who have different sexual orientations?
15. In what ways will the Plenary Council encourage all Catholic people both to deepen their response to the love of God and to further their understanding through lifelong learning about the Catholic intellectual and spiritual traditions?
16. Can married priests be returned to ministry in the Church?
17. How can women be included into the governance of the Church at the highest levels?
18. How can we assure that laity are well represented at diocesan councils?
19. How will the Church openly welcome LGBTI people, divorced, unbaptized, and people of other religions and beliefs into its community?
20. How can the Church involve more women in its hierarchy and decision-making?

21. How can the Church demonstrate its relevance to young people who naturally question its rules and rigidity?
22. Will you please consider nuns being ordained?
23. Our parishes are dwindling with each passing year. How can we make the Church relevant to families and our children?
24. Will the laity be involved in governance and decision-making?
25. How can the Church be the face of Christ in Australia today?
26. Why was so much effort put into what is often a garbled and unspeakable new translation of the Mass rather than sorting the lack of inclusive language?
27. How are you going to promote our Catholic Church out in the media so we can share our good news stories i.e. to promote to the larger community?
28. Will the Plenary Council actually act upon all the suggestions made during this dialogue process?
29. Will you consider mature married deacons in the Church?
30. How can we learn/teach more about environmental issues?
31. How will you make Church more relevant to the youth and encourage their involvement?
32. How do we foster trust, loyalty and prayer in our Church?
33. How are you reaching people outside of Church communities?
34. Will women be ordained priests?
35. Will the Nicene Creed be made inclusive again?
36. Will you stop stifling parishes by sending in priests that are not pastoral?
37. How to be a more inclusive Church where all are included in participation and decision-making?
38. How to make faith education more effective, through school outreach for the teachers, students and parents?
39. What methods/ideas do you have to encourage young people?
40. Will Australian bishops (and archbishops) be able to action the ideas and solutions provided by those who take the time to attend Plenary Council meetings?
41. Will the bishops and those appointed to the Plenary Council management and Rome listen to what the faithful are putting forward?
42. Is it right for the Church to withhold the sacraments?
43. How is the Church going to respond to the issue of climate change or the refugee incidents?
44. Will the Church fully compensate those victims of child sexual abuse on behalf of those individuals who were found guilty?
45. How will the Church make children feel safe in the Church?
46. How will all topics be acknowledged regardless of whether there is change or not?
47. Why is the clerical class still viewed as superior?
48. About young people and marriage: How are you going to get young people to consider getting married in the Church—how will you make it appealing to them?
49. Could our religious beliefs be made more explicit (expressed clearly) and not vague on major issues/events?
50. Could priests have more 'pastoral' training to deal with the current generation?
51. What are we doing about the youths struggling with drug and alcohol abuse?
52. Should priests be forced to change parishes if everything is working?
53. What specifically will the Council do to stop clericalism?

54. What structures, support and education will be provided to the people to ensure that the laity are raised to their rightful place as equal sharers in the priesthood of Christ—and not merely sheep to be led by the pastor wherever he wishes?
55. Why can't we allow women to become priests?
56. Liturgical rituals to be more inclusive, engaging and practical?
57. *Humanae Vitae* to be re-examined with particular focus on contraception?
58. Divorced and remarried couples to be fully included in receiving the sacrament of the Eucharist?
59. Could annulment processes be more pastoral and expedited?
60. Regional and remote parishes require greater support—particularly priests who are isolated—their mental health and wellbeing require greater attention: what ongoing support is needed?
61. How can we be a community, which welcomes everyone?
62. Will the Church adapt to modernisation in the future in line with the changing times?
63. Is it reasonable for the Church to expect to have a long-term influence within the community if it continues to marginalise people who are children of God?
64. Will there be acceptance of those who sit outside of Church 'norms' i.e., LGBT community?
65. How is the Church helping to build tolerance within the Catholic communities?
66. How is the Church adapting to the changes and beliefs within our society?
67. Is the Church willing to make changes in order to remain current? i.e. gay marriage.
68. How will the Church stay relevant in a society where technology is changing how we live?
69. Will the Church adapt teachings to fit in with modern society or will they stay firm on their understanding of teachings, which may be a point of tension between Catholics and seculars?
70. Is the Church looking to become more flexible? Flexibility in changing with the expectations of the people.
71. How will you continue to spread the Catholic faith?
72. Will there be greater screening and re-evaluating for seminarians?
73. How is the Church going to embrace diversity?
74. How is the Church going to be more transparent with its dealings with sexual abuse cases?
75. How will the Church go about including and accepting all?
76. How is the Church going to recreate itself to be more relevant to today's world and to bring people back to the Church?
77. How is the Church going to induct more clergy from within Australia?
78. Why don't Catholic families go to Sunday Mass but their children attend a Catholic school?
79. How will you attract the youth to the Church?
80. How can the Church openly accept the LGBTQI community?
81. Will the Church be reflective and critical of itself in trying to give witness to the life of Jesus and be less concerned of its own interests and assists?
82. Will the Church consider the ordination of married men?
83. Is the Church going to put a stop to teaching about 'sex' in Catholic schools?
84. How can we convince Rome, that like mission countries, we need a Church that is adapted to our (Australian) culture?

85. How can we co-create real changes/opportunities for lay leadership? (The bishops and clergy can no longer lead credibly without an empowered laity in a co-responsible and reciprocal set of relationships).
86. Why can't we go to church to honour and love God instead of catching with each other? No one can pray even if they wish to because of the noise.
87. Why are we trying to please everyone by having a say about our Church and encouraging erroneous theology to creep into the Church?
88. The question that must be considered: "will the Council remain true and faithful to the Church instituted and established by our Lord Jesus Christ"?



**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.

I found the Latin Mass at 19, it changed my world. Mass was no longer a sad, watered down 'Jesus loves you' but do whatever you want excuse for a concert. It was solid, a rock in a changing unsteady world. It presented a Catholicism that held me accountable, the pushed me to be better, to be worthy of participating in this great sacrifice. I love the Mass now, in any language, it is the highlight of my week. The sermons found at the TLM have prompted me to research my faith further, make up for my lack of catechesis as a child and young adult. I have children of my own now, they will know all the richness and beauty of the Church through the ages with the Latin Mass, the music, the 'bells and smells'—all of it. They will need this sanctuary of truth, beauty and goodness in the hard, secular world they will grow up in.

I had a calling from God in 2017. I was not religious in any way. I was overcome with the urgency to visit [a retreat venue] in [ - ]. The next morning, I drive out and stayed a couple of nights and by the time I came back home, I believed in God and the Catholic faith. I entered into an RCIA group and was Baptised on Easter vigil 2018. I am extremely lucky to have a priest of the [ - ] order; Fr [ - ]. He is an amazing individual who has drawn me deep into the Catholic faith by his genuine and authentic love of Jesus and his tradition methods (perhaps due to his accent). When he speaks I can't help but feel close to God. I yearn for traditional ways. I found a huge gap in our local area and all over [ - ]. Men in their 30's and 40's. In life, this age group are the driving forces in the world... at work, management/middle management, families, etc ... this age group steers the ship in life under the guidance of more senior people. And yet we lack this age group in Church. I started a men's group and had a dozen people on day 1 and gets stronger each time. We need men who are real men and have conviction with their Catholic faith. This is one area the Church can work on. I wish I had access to Church leadership and sit down and discuss how to address these issues. The Catholic Church can fix so many of society's issues if we can just fix ourselves first. We are so close as long as we have real people with real life experiences leading the Church, and not just book smart people.

No. The Christian experience that shaped me was living with a community of consecrated brothers, sisters, and priests in Italy. That community thirsted after holiness.

My family was lucky to attend the Year of the family in 1994 and it was a defining, life uplifting experience.

I love and am proud of my faith ... I inherited a deep, loyal and practical faith from my Irish parents. I have made it my own, and it is different from theirs, but it holds those characteristics. As a woman of deep faith, I am pained and shamed within the Church at times; consciously and unconsciously. I feel excluded, befuddled and bemused by the recent changes to the language used for ritual and worship. I no longer attend Sunday Mass as a matter of course, at a church. I find it frustrating and often come away angry, at the ill-informed words of homilies, at the language that is irrelevant and the glaringly obvious symbols of a male dominated, hierarchical and oppressive Church. This grieves me as I love and value Eucharistic gatherings. I am learning to live with the experiences of grief and shame as part of my experience of Church ... they are as real and as deep as my sense of joy, and of

<p>calling to be a witness to God's love, abundance, generosity to all people and a compassionate response to suffering. I feel challenged by Church and by the people in it—priests and other lay people—whom I have loved and who have loved me into being.</p>
<p>Going to a wonderful convent for all of my education. Having some marvellous priests throughout my childhood and adolescence. Life in The Spirit Seminars. Attending a wonderful Prayer Group. Attending various courses including many great courses through the Centre for Faith Enrichment. Going on Spiritual Retreats especially the most recent Ignatian Retreat in Daily Life on the First Spiritual Exercises. The miraculous healing of my mother. She was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer in 1989. She had all the physical signs and symptoms. There was no error in diagnosis. She was ready to commence chemo and radiotherapy as a last resort when through the prayers of many, many people and a trip to Fatima was healed. She is still alive to this day aged 87, with no return of the cancer. Praise and thanks be to God. I have witnessed many other signs and experiences of God's actions and love and have been blessed to receive healings myself too. Thanks be to our God.</p>
<p>I was commissioned as an Acolyte in 1974, one of the first in [ - ]. Since then, I have been privileged to serve in many parishes in whatever ways have been needed by the community in consultation with the priest. One particularly poignant occasion was when our priest (who lives 140 km from this town) phoned me and asked me to take the Blessed Sacrament urgently to a man who was dying and who had not been a Mass attendee for many years. I was able to do this and get there in time; the priest arrived later for Last Rites. However, my story of faith goes back to a time when we lived in a town with an elderly priest who was very unpopular. My wife and I found his sermons to be too politically biased and we stopped attending Mass. But after a few months, we both missed our regular Sunday service, so we joined the Anglican community for several years until we shifted town. They were a warm and welcoming group and we were able to assist with music liturgy. When we left that town, we re-joined the Catholic community and have stayed there since but we still have a strong relationship with those Anglicans who made us welcome and the Anglican community in the town where we live now. In short, it is very hard to turn your back on the Church so I know how some of those people who have taken that course of action must feel.</p>
<p>I have suffered for the Church. I have also suffered FROM the Church.</p>
<p>There are numerous experiences of insults and put downs by members of the clergy imbibed in their clericalism but on the other side, I have come across cases of committed individuals. To be honest it is not the character of the individual who has inspired to continue to practice my faith but what I believe.</p>
<p>I have had the Schizoaffective disorder—a combination of schizophrenia and bi-polar disorders—for 52 years. I have had 6 admissions to hospitals over this time, and used 8 different antipsychotic medications to successfully manage the condition. However the support facilities provided by the Catholic Church are minimal here in [ - ]. Once while being admitted to a public hospital I was advised to give my religion away as that could be a contributing factor to my illness. I suspect many people are given this counselling in the public system. I would hope that a Catholic facility should be more affirming of a patient's faith. I gave a talk about my illness at my local parish a few years ago—we expected 30 people to turn up, but over 100 attended. This is the extent of the problem of mental illness amongst the parishioners who turn up to Mass each Sunday, and who are barely acknowledged and supported. So, I earnestly ask the Council to look at how the Church can substantially increase the Church's support in this area.</p>
<p>To see brothers get ordained as priests at the same time in [ - ] is very inspiring.</p>
<p>From Pre-Primary to High school I have been educated by religious orders and they have given me an understanding of 'What God expects of me in my Life'—Love, Mercy, Compassion. I have been inspired in the last 10 years by two priests in [ - ] who have shown these qualities to their flock, both spiritually and in their practical daily life. They are true Spiritual and practical shepherds of God!</p>
<p>I have been involved in Catholic schools for 45 years, first as a student then as a teacher, then as a teacher and parent. I have been very fortunate to meet people, adults and children, who have shown such joy and love of others that it is truly humbling and has had a profound effect on me. It's</p>

as if through them one gets a 'glimpse God'. Conversely, I have seen people 'destroyed' by the treatment they received in Catholic schools. For the most part these are staff working in the schools. A teacher said to me, "the best way to be turned off The Catholic Church is to work for it". I have heard from others and experienced firsthand corruption, hatred, dishonesty and bullying by school leaders. While these issues were within individual schools, there also is a 'feeling' of such behaviour being ignored at system level. Fortunately for me I grew up in a strong family and such experiences have not shaken my Catholic Faith however they have shaken my view of the Catholic Church. I fear that for others it has turned them off Catholicism as well.

My experience of Faith ... 1st encounter with the Holy Spirit through the sacrament of Confirmation. Personal friendships with nuns sharing their love for God have shaped me. Service for Our Lady through visitations to the Aged, the Blind and the Sick shaped me. Scripture Readings every Sunday shape me. Prayer life—its growth, shapes me. Sharing of my faith with my family and friends and parishioners, shape me.

I am inspired by the wonderful work of Catholic lay organisations and individuals, in conjunction with clergy, for poor relief, youth support, education, spiritual developments (meditating, discussing, teaching) 'Catholic Action' overseas mission work and other activities. We are all inspired by Jesus' teachings the Gospels' messages. In my case, I am much involved in the Catenian Association of Catholic laymen and its works of support for Catholic Youth, I facilitate philosophy discussion groups to a Community Learning Centre and give witness to Christianity and all its positive contributions to society. The great challenge for the Church in Australia is to keep our young people interested and active in practice of the Faith after they leave our Catholic schools. They say that Church becomes 'irrelevant' to them but we do not seem to know why so we do not address their needs. A second great challenge is to draw back in to some practice of the Faith by the non-practising disillusioned Catholics. In the Catenian Association we invite them, usually the 'Once-rs' and 'Twice-rs a Year' whom we know, to come to our monthly meetings which are for prayers and self-support in life. The Church in Australia has these and their challenges, and the [challenge] is all of us laity must be included in matters of governance and operation particularly in respect to property and money. With more say in these matters, more lay people may have more to do with practice of the "Faith" within the Church.

After I expressed frustration at the Church's misogyny, an Anglican priest told me, "Don't let them take your Church away from you". That was the first time I realised that the Church was my Church. Well, if it is my Church why do I feel, as a woman, so unrepresented? I am the Body of Christ, am I not? I know it. Why doesn't the Catholic Church?

Please see submission. My story did not happen in Australia, but in New Zealand where a Sunday church service could not be taken by clergy. The Community led by its own members gave an example of faith in action.

In my previous career as a teacher and Assistant Principal, I worked for 14 years in the [ - ]. The charism of the school, founded by the [ - ] in [ - ], was inspirational. The history and charism permeated our everyday school lives. Learning about the individual Sisters, their devotion and their sacrifices in order to build up the school community which is thriving today, was both humbling and inspirational. Having this knowledge and understanding made it very easy to continue these links with the Sisters, who today have missions in developing countries, and provide our support. It was very easy to explain to the children how the Sisters shared gospel values and for them to see the importance of witness. Like a lot of Catholics, the scandals of the Church have rocked me to my core, and unfortunately have led me to question my Catholic faith. I very proudly call myself a Christian, but have questions at present. Remembering my experience and interactions with these Sisters and my time in this school reinforces Gospel values and the power of God's love.

I find that Catholic schooling system has failed parents. My 6 kids went to Catholic school, I took them to church every Sunday, said prayers at home and after they finished school—no more church.

Mainly mother and Catholic schools with role model nuns.

I converted to being a Catholic, when I got married. My logic was that having a common faith would mean I could participate in all my family activities. I was lucky to move to a parish that had a priest of the wisdom of [ - ], [ - ] parish, who has recently died. Father [ - ] developed in me love and respect of the Catholic Church. I became an active Acolyte in his parish, but because of the lack of Respect in my current church, I am not active in any way during the Mass.

My current story is I have just tonight, attended a Plenary Council Discussion, which to me was a waste of my time (as per my issues in boxes above). The format of the Discussion was such that poor Sister [ - ] who Chaired the meeting lost control quickly as she has no experience in "Herding Cats". Our table had one person who thought it a good time to tell us what he thought was wrong with God's World and he also elected himself as scribe but didn't have time in between breaths to put down many of his points—the other four on the Table basically sat back and listened. Hence my separate submission.

I am fortunate to have been brought up with strict Catholic parents who loved me and sacrificed a lot to send me to Catholic schools and although I was punished harshly with the strap on a regular basis by the Christian brothers for talking ,not doing my homework or not being able to recall facts, etc., it didn't do me too much damage and I attribute my discipline and faith today to the way I was brought up and value the Lord and am so grateful for the gifts he has given me in my life.

I am a divorced Catholic who still practises his faith despite getting the feeling at times that the Church doesn't really want to know me. Some years ago, I wondered about starting a support group in my parish for divorced Catholics (... at the urging of some committed Catholic family relatives) and approached the parish priest who basically was not interested at all. I honestly thought I could make a positive contribution and be a support to others, having gone through the traumatic experience of a divorce myself but it seems that the Church did not want that. I find it disappointing that the Church pretends that marriage annulments are not a form of divorce in the Catholic Church. I have it on very good authority that a number of divorced Catholic school principals ( ... with children themselves) were threatened with termination of their employment from the Catholic education system if they did not seek marriage annulments. This reeks of hypocrisy at the very least. I have become quite critical of the Church and at times have questioned my involvement with it. From the late 1980's and 90's, as I recall, when claims of sexual abuse by clergy first started appearing in the press, I was dismayed to read of the Church seeking legal means to suppress information, etc., sought by prosecutors. I strongly believed even then, that one day the Church would be held accountable for this. Truth will always triumph in the end, sadly, much to the Church's regret today.

Yes—I was helping wheelchair bound people enter a church and the priest abused me from the pulpit in the middle of a Sunday Mass for **ADVOCATING FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESS**.

For me, I am very lucky. There are many stories. Attending World Youth Day in Sydney was a great experience that helped me to admit I wanted to keep attending Mass and deepen my faith. Also, joining the Catholic Charismatic Community Disciples of Jesus—singing praise and worship music with many other young people, being prayed over, resting in the spirit, sharing my faith journey with others, in disciples of Jesus but also at Catholic Youth retreats. The moment when the construction workers in Sydney held up a makeshift cross as we were walking across the Sydney harbour bridge, while we were talking, singing, dancing, laughing. There were some Fijians and Tongans who brought their traditional instruments and were singing traditional songs—it was very moving. When they held up the cross, we all fell silent for a moment and then cheered with applause. At a Mass during the days in the diocese in Sydney, we danced around the church in a conga line during the entrance hymn. It was very moving. I lead a young adults prayer group and when we pray the Cenacle rosary and hear inner locutions he received from Our Lady, the messages are so relevant and pertinent today even though they are from years ago, the hairs on the back of my neck stand right up. When I pray in Eucharistic adoration, I feel a sense of clarity and peace like no other experience I have ever had on earth. At the young men of God national catholic men's retreat it was inspiring to see so

<p>many men on fire for Christ in praise and worship songs plus there were very honest about life's challenges in their testimonies.</p>
<p>Being able to attend Adoration at perpetual adoration chapels has been a wonderful help to my life as a Christian. Jesus in the Eucharist is everything. I would love there to be more opportunities in parishes for people to experience this wondrous gift.</p>
<p>Several years ago, I attended a lecture at U.W.A. by Matthew Fox. In the discussion, it became clear that a large number of people present were angry and felt alienated from the Catholic Church because of the teaching and practice on divorce and civil remarriage for its members. It is heartbreaking that people in this situation receive rejection and not acceptance in the name of our Lord. I make this submission for such people as well as for myself.</p>
<p>As a 71-year-old woman, there are many stories regarding my experience of faith and of the Church in Australia that have shaped me. The most important part of my story is that I was born to a very faithful mother who nurtured within in me the love of God. My parents sent me to a Catholic school run by the Srs of [ - ] who were able to instruct me in the faith. Being in faithful parish communities has made my faith grow and develop. I have always been a person who questions things and I don't go along with some of the mainstream ideas which perpetrate throughout the older members of the Church, but I feel accepted anyway.</p>
<p>A twenty-three I was ordained a diocesan priest. I believe I wanted to serve, yet I was placed on a pedestal and lived in comfort in one of the best houses in the area—a presbytery. At thirty-one, I received a dispensation by St Paul VI and got married in a Catholic Church. My marriage failed. After a long time, I sought to return to the priesthood. My case went to Rome and they looked favourably on my request. With the change of bishop my request was stopped and refused on the local level. I have been a dedicated Catholic all my life. I put this down to my family life. I didn't get what I wanted but God gave me a ministry I probably would have died for as an official cleric.</p>
<p>Balance of female and male directors in Church Agencies in the Archdiocese of [ - ] allows for healthy and balanced community representation. Refer PDF submission.</p>
<p>I grew up in a practising Catholic family and environment, as did most of my long-term friends. My 4 children were raised in similar circumstances. As I write, most of my friends no longer practise their religion; very few of their children ever enter a church; only 2 of my children ever go to church; only 5 of my 8 grandchildren have been baptised. This would appear to be a common story among parents and grandparents to whom I speak. It is with a great sadness that this fact is acknowledged. Where does one turn for strength if not to God?</p>
<p>When I was in a certain parish, I felt empowered by the parish priest who was pastorally involved and allowed the members of the community to attend to the areas of administration. There was such a spirit of cooperation by all the members that I looked forward to attending the ministries I was involved in. There was a great community spirit and the gifts of hospitality were very evident as many were generous in sharing their gifts. The mission of Christ was alive and well in the way members reached out to the poor and suffering.</p>
<p>I have a few experiences of faith and the power of prayer has been proven in most cases. When something has seemed insurmountable and bound to fail, my belief in God has seen me through. Also, I can truthfully say that seemingly terrible times are often followed or rewarded by experiences of greatest joy and blessings.</p>
<p>I was born in 1984 and grew up in a committed Catholic family. We were part of a now-defunct Charismatic community, and I attended Catholic primary and secondary schools. My experience of the Church was rather pedestrian. There seems nothing particularly remarkable about our faith. It was a list of extra morals and a requirement to attend church each week. I was an outlier at school as my family attended Mass every Sunday. After school finished, I attended UNDA and earned a Bachelor of Education, and taught in our Catholic schools, mostly religious education. When I reached age 25 the charismatic community of which I had been a part of since birth collapsed amid great scandal. All of my friends abandoned my faith, as did my brothers and my sister. I decided that I would try to learn more about the faith—to test whether it was real or not. In this process, I</p>

<p>discovered elements of the tradition, including the rosary (which was wholly new to me at that time) and the Extraordinary form of the Roman Rite. To my utter surprise, when I spoke openly of my newly found affinity of these traditional expressions of faith I found that I was looked upon with great suspicion by my colleagues and those in senior positions in Catholic education. This cold reception was not at all expected and sadly fuelled a very unhealthy attitude in me towards the institutional Church. Those associated with more traditional forms of faith sympathised with me, as this had been their experience also—there was a toxic atmosphere in those circles which was the result of their having been ostracised from the greater Catholic community (notwithstanding their own contributions to the way in which they were perceived). While I no longer consider myself a part of these circles, I have a great affection for the people who maintain a presence there, and I still find my faith deeply nourished by more traditional expressions of the faith (including liturgy and music). I am concerned that if these people continue to be called rigid dogmatists that the rest of the Church will miss out on their great contribution, as well as the contribution of the tradition which they love so dearly.</p>
<p>My experience with the Church is mostly positive but I have felt ostracised by its rules and restrictions in the past. The Church has also hurt members of my family through its misdeeds and these sins committed by individual members of the Church have had horrible lasting effects on these family members. These effects will never go away because of these people using God to justify horrible actions against children.</p>
<p>For me, the Church is a warm, comforting and relaxing experience. Most of my experience is from Mass and as a secondary school teacher in Catholic schools. It is a comfortable experience.</p>
<p>The only thing I would like to say is that as a young person we had a type of youth club called the YCW (Young Christian Workers). This group met regularly, possibly each fortnight, and it provided great training opportunities for the development of young leaders. It had a gospel-based theme which was discussed and you were then expected to try and implement this leadership in your workplace. I know that it was a great benefit to me in all facets of my life.</p>
<p>I joined the Christian Brothers at age 13 in 1953, and the spirituality was stressing winning my way to heaven and based on fear ... Redemptorist retreats!! Now I have, after 35 years of Ignatian Spirituality, an acceptance that God loves me and is full of mercy and compassion. I have been able to do the full Spiritual Exercises which have helped me be on Christ's mission in the world, in my job as a Social Worker and in my marriage of 40 years and in the World Community of CLC.</p>
<p>My faith development has been strongly aided by family, school and parish involvement. Relationships formed within the parish and school community have assisted with my faith journey. Whilst not always keen to be involved—encouragement to do so has been worthwhile.</p>
<p>I moved to [ - ] about ten years ago now and my first experience going to Mass here was not very welcoming. I took my two young children, not knowing anyone, and not knowing what's going on in the Mass (I knew the prayers and responses in my own mother tongue but not in English). I kept coming back due to my own faith and years later now I'm familiar with the Mass. But I think the Church could have made it easier for everyone to feel included.</p>
<p>A motor-mission Sister was one day leading a workshop at which the bishop was present. She spoke at some length on the importance of the Sunday Gospel in evangelization. At the end, the bishop asked her "What about doctrine, Sister? She replied, "Jesus didn't seem to worry about doctrine!"</p>
<p>The influence of Religious in my schooling had a strong impact—relationships with them, kindness of them, their example. The influence of my mother, her faith, her dedication, her love, her courage, her relationship with God, her goodness. For a long time, I was an observer. Through the exposition of the Blessed sacrament, in one hour, I experienced the presence of Jesus. From there, I made the commitment.</p>
<p>I was brought up in a Catholic family in [ - ] and attended a Catholic school. I always wanted desperately to belong and feel the presence of God but I never did so I felt like a fake and like I didn't belong because I wasn't perfect. Once I left school, I became a scientist and questioned the existence of God and Jesus and the relevance of the Church in my life. I stopped going to church because I felt</p>

<p>like I couldn't pretend anymore. I struggled to accept some of the issues with which my opinion doesn't match the Church's teachings: LGBTI issues, divorce, contraception, abortion, euthanasia. Now I'm 37 with two children, an atheist husband and a struggle in deciding what I want to teach my children. I had them baptised into the Catholic Church as I wanted them to have a Christian upbringing and many of my family are still active Catholics. Over the years, I've tried to learn as much as I can about different religions and I feel that I now understand the purpose of religion and the elements of Catholicism which have been important in my life and which I intend to pass onto my children. The most important lesson for me is Jesus' message to love thy neighbour as oneself. Everything else flows on from that: respect for all, charity for the less fortunate. I think that many of the Church's rules have lost sight of that message of love: Jesus didn't discriminate and he loved and helped everyone.</p>
<p>My mother once told me when I was quite young and railing against the lack of Christianity that I perceived in my local priests and nuns that they were indeed only people hopefully trying their best just as we should. I have met many great and good people in my faith journey but it's the not-good ones that don't help the cause.</p>
<p>Through my experience, I have obtained a sense of faith through God, God has specifically helped me through the hardships in life as it gives me a feeling that someone is constantly looking after my family and I.</p>
<p>As an adult, I have attended and participated in several retreats and courses presented by the Catholic Church and have found this has brought me closer to the Lord and helped me on my spiritual journey. Can you please consider introducing some of these programs into the Catholic schools so our children will have a better chance of knowing the Lord? If I had participated in some of these programs when I was at school, I feel I would have had an earlier start in my faith journey. This is the chance I would like our children to have before it's too late.</p>
<p>I would like to improve in my spiritual sense, pray more and help others less fortunate. I endeavour to attend Mass twice a week and believe this has assisted me in life's endeavours.</p>
<p>I grew up in a time where life was a lot simpler. Religion seemed pretty straight forward as well. If you believed in God, following his ways then you would be fine. My husband and I have raised 4 children and watched them question so many things. This seemed to be encouraged throughout their schooling in the Catholic system. My children are good people who are now raising families of their own but Church does not play a strong role in their lives. They do not see the relevance, what does it do for them? They know how important my faith is to me but don't seem to want or need faith in their lives. I know I was busy bringing up my family but still went to Mass every Sunday and said prayers but my faith grew immensely when my father was ill and subsequently passed away. It was as if a light had been switched on, my faith became so much more important and I have continued to nurture it over the years. I know my children have faith they just do not make a commitment to grow in faith. Will their children have any faith at all?</p>
<p>Topic was Read and Learn about the Bible and Dogmas. Stories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I entered the Catholic faith as a 40 yr old. I tried to read Bible but got frustrated. I decided to listen and read books on how to ... and listen at Mass.</li> <li>2. I studied Bible since a child in Mass. Studied in secondary school especially Paul's letters and his journeys. Nanna painted Jesus (from the Bible) and stories. When I was 40, I studied Church history, Bible, Christology and I loved it! I am thinking to join a Bible study group.</li> <li>3. I liked learning about dogmas as it showed me a pathway for human rights and social justice and a way to live in freedom. e.g. Immaculate Conception helped me understand my faith and purity.</li> </ol>
<p>I lost faith in the Church years ago when someone I loved killed himself and the belief was there was no entry to Jesus in Heaven but I travelled and visited the Holy Land and when I visited the Holy Sepulchre, I had an epiphany and regained my faith and my faith was stronger.</p>
<p>At the moment, all the contact the kids' parents have is through the school. I think the Catholic Church can do the Religious education including adults, in the parishes; I am from Burma and there we used to go to Catechism classes on the weekend Saturday and Sunday and the religious nuns</p>

<p>would run these and they were really good; I remember that home Masses used to be popular and I really liked them; People are no longer coming to church so the Church has to go to the people; If you amalgamate parishes, then that could free one priest to go and do home Masses, etc.</p>
<p>An enormous amount of interest and enthusiasm has been generated by the PC discussions in our parish. It is to be hoped that the bishops respond with pastoral sensitivity and realism to the legitimate concerns of such groups. If not, the level of distrust and cynicism will only continue to grow as the Church is reduced to a pious huddle of the self-righteous and un-self-critical.</p>
<p>Seeing elderly on knees in Fatima making way to church in hot sun inspired me.</p>
<p>I have been shaped by my now passed, parents—my mother a convert, my father a kind and decent man. Their example was everything. We have tried to continue in that vein ...</p>
<p>Support for the transitional stages. Between youth programs and high school to adulthood and work. Once you are no longer a teen YCW and more social groups activities YCS experience of community. This person sees the similarities between Church youth focus and youth wings of other organisations where there is a gap bringing the next stages of life. Lack of support when you leave school Transition to adulthood. My faith grew when I learnt more about theology of the body and natural family planning. YCS community, not just parish community, I have established and lived in an intentional Christian female house community. Recognise the diversity of community some people in the wider Church community I might disagree with I have seemed out (sic) communities. Community is important as it brings and welcomes all created friendships where we share common faith and help guide individuals through their journey. Personal relationships have been key parish community (youth) seems to need a strong personality to drive it. It is more difficult for single adults. Child sexual abuse program allowed me to start a dialogue about my past experiences as well as adoration. They're both resources and support networks I needed to help me out.</p>
<p>I had the misfortune to be in a religious cult (of the sexually, spiritually, psychologically and financially abusive kind) for about 15 years of my life. This abuse was far worse for women—who were supposed to be 'submissive' even to the sexual abuse of the self-anointed leader. It was a so-called covenant community that went terribly bad, and was eventually shut down—although it took 30 years or so! I had very little to do with the 'outside world' during this time, including the parish as this was discouraged. But I did go to Mass. Sadly there was nothing in the celebration of the Liturgy that gave me any clues that what I was in was so outrageously wrong i.e. a male priest prayed to a male God about men. I remember one worshipping community—Redemptorists—who used the phrase 'sisters and brothers'; it felt like getting a drink of water when parched with thirst, but as I didn't hear it elsewhere, it wasn't enough to raise questions. Inclusive language would have witnessed to me that the Church unlike the cult I was in regarded women with dignity by not allowing their identity to be masked by male pronouns and designations. Inclusive language would speak of dignity and respect even now. The Church is such a latecomer in prompting justice and dignity for women that I don't think it can do much by way of leadership in this area, but it can try to be a discerning follower where appropriate. Inclusive language is a minimum.</p>
<p>Yes, I have always had a deep faith in God and the Catholic Church, but since I was a child I have felt a very deep concern when I have seen weak priests or wishy-washy catechists. The true Church is beautiful when it is focused on the sacrifice of the Mass. When I made my first Holy Communion at age 8, I was disappointed when some of the congregation tried to make it festival atmosphere. I know they thought they were making it better, but in truth, they ruined it by causing a distraction from the sacrament. Church worship is not about being entertaining but about worship. Why is every current move of the Church about being modern? A simple traditional Catholic is today the most marginalised of all. Trying to follow the Church's very own Catechism often results in scorn from the Church's very own members. Asking for help in following Humanae Vitae often leaves one feeling laughed at as even many priests reject it because it seems too hard. Yes, it is very difficult but isn't this just a cross we are supposed to carry? I found it very disconcerting when discussing this subject with priests and catechists that no one felt strong enough to support this teaching. I was even reprimanded for refusing to receive communion when I was unable to maintain the Church's</p>

teachings at times. I never blamed the Church for this teaching. I simply took it upon myself to aim for more self-discipline. I find it very concerning when no one would help me, particularly when I was searching for help. In summary to share a story of what shaped my faith, I had a very devout Irish priest name Fr [ - ] when I was a child. This man was a true shepherd of my soul, if only we had more priests like him. He wasn't scared of standing up and defending the truth to anyone, he never searched for man's approval as many in the Church now appear to be doing. He has long since gone to God and I strongly believe that he would have faced God having spoken the truth and defending Jesus' teaching. He also had a strong devotion to Our Lady and as an elderly priest, would drive out through the bush to celebrate Mass, Adoration, Stations of the Cross or even just rosary for a small number of faithful, he was tireless in administering the last rites. Today's modern priests however, with better cars and better roads cannot even make it out to our little church which is only 20mins away, to offer us minimal Masses of obligation at night time should it interfere with their social life. Even to the point of abandoning the last rites for a dying soul.

My personal experience is that growing up I went to church because my family did. That's all I knew and that's what I followed. In teenage years I was bored at church but I went because my family did. Throughout my life however whenever I asked God for big things somehow, I always seemed to be ok and get what I need, I began to realise the love that he has for me and the power of what he is able to do. I had an addiction that he saved me from without any treatment—just through the power of prayer and hope. Each day now I witness small miracles which I attribute to him.

Governance and decision-making: Some churches don't even currently have PPCs. Priests always have the final say. Women and laity need more say in decision-making. Priest should focus on more important parts of their role than administrative.

I recently did an Alpha course and it was excellent and I found that it really helped me recognize the Holy Spirit very active in my life; The Alpha course went back to basics and explained everything so well; I think that there is not enough sharing of good stories in people's lives so we need to do much more of this.

There is a worldwide problem of shortage of priests. My dad lives in France and they have a problem there too. Priests are getting recruited from third world countries as men see it as an easy and smart way out of their desperate situation in their country. Our priests are worked off their feet! The clergy are spread thin. The recruitment process of the priesthood needs to be attractive e.g. offer marriage. In the past many years ago, it was an option for priests but now it has changed. My 95-yr-old father said he would like to see priests allowed to marry. It should be a choice available to them to have a family—they would be able to relate to people and their circumstances. It sounds like the vetting process for priests has taken a slide. I was working at a remote school where there was a quick successive turnover of priests (all from overseas) and there was one that had an affair with a teacher which resulted in a baby—red flag—something needs to be done; We live in an instant electronic world and the Church is currently silent so our voice is not out there. The opinion out there is that the Church has lot of money. But does the Church have a face?; I was going to become a nun but the only reason why I didn't was because I wanted to be a mother. A few of us in the discussion group wanted to be nuns! The structure of the leadership in the Church needs to be re-structured and designed so that it is a SHARED responsibility. In my experience I didn't grow up in the Catholic Church but grew up in another church and it still seems to be only 10% of the people do everything. We need other people to have leadership roles; There used to be Christ Care years ago ... what happened to it?? I think there could be difficulties with priests married. I still prefer male priests (one opinion of our group); I have been preparing the altar for Mass for the last 7 years and I was told off by one of the acolytes because I was a woman! That should not happen; Choir/Music: We, husband and wife, have been involved with music in other churches and we believe music helps the congregation focus on the Gospel. Is there an openness in the Catholic Church to other forms of music? I feel people will come to church if they love the music—they will participate. It can be attractive to the younger generation. We got wonderful feedback from a gentleman at Mass who

<p>said he came to Mass because he could hear the beautiful music from outside the church. An idea could be to play music half hour before Mass, to attract people to come and sing their hearts out!</p>
<p>Topic on education: High school Yr 11 Retreat Experience, the Holy Spirit changed the student's faith and has kept her faith till today. The experience has led her to have a strong faith. That is what is missing in today's schools where the school does not bring/let the children have the supernatural encounter with the Holy Spirit—speaking in tongue. There are wide variety religious experiences, not any one encounter will be the same. Retreats to experience Jesus e.g. the meaning of Christmas. To learn meditation from the primary school to develop their faith/encounter Jesus. To have the meditation as part/or compulsory of their schooling in Catholic system. Students pick up very early on their teacher's faith. Faith is not part of the job interview.</p>
<p>How do we encourage (and trust) the bishops and clergy to listen and accept changes recommended by the laity?; We don't talk about sin—we need more education at Mass regarding sinfulness and focused teaching of what Jesus taught. Cardinals, bishops and clergy need to be involved in real life and closer to their parishioners—they need to live like Jesus taught us; WE need to be allowed to be grown up as members of our Church; sacraments are supposed to be FREE and the tradition of paying for Masses or sacraments should be clarified and reformed; Story: Whilst I was educated by Catholic churches and Catholic schools and Catholic University, I strongly believe that the Church should relinquish the responsibility of education to the State. Catholic teachers, administrative officers and buildings will be absorbed by the State. We need to bring people back to parishes and the Church for religious education and the sacraments. Parishes can employ qualified people to teach religion/values/sacraments—not just the priests; Another story: I like to make a donation for special intentions at Mass.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There used to be the NCGM—National Catholic Girls Movement—which enabled young Christians to gather for dances and sport and be part of the wider Church. Similar to YCS, YCW and other youth groups these days but with a greater presence. After her confirmation aged 8, there was no spiritual direction, only school.</li> <li>• Mum with young child, new to this church but feels kind of alone and don't know others when attending Mass here. Name Tag Sundays are good. At her Catholic school, religion classes were just a study period, no spiritual guidance in school. Fortunately, she had been part of another parish family group since age of 13 which meets weekly to share experiences of God, that God is part of one's life and the relevance of it, that God has helped others. This has kept me in the Church. No such group in this parish. However, she left that group and with parish community acceptance was given room to breathe and freedom to explore other parishes. Living with siblings with disability and mental illness has helped her to see God in her life. She had her child baptised by the same priest who baptised her who made the observation that it wasn't often that those he baptised would come back to the Church to have their children baptised. Also, it is a foreign concept to her other friends, Catholic and non-Catholic, to live a Catholic marriage with an openness to life.</li> <li>• She has 4 adult children of which only one is a practising Catholic while another condemns the Church. Questioning where she has gone wrong? Came as a migrant to Australia and feels the Church could reach out to new families to connect them to other families.</li> <li>• Feels there is a missing gap in the age group of young adults and young families in our Church—no groups to cater to their needs</li> <li>• Catholic religion classes which are academic and examinable had put her children off religion.</li> </ul>
<p>I was in a church once where the priest at communion time invited all to receive communion. In the same church some years later, another priest listed all those who were not to come forward to receive communion and told them to sit down. I felt like sitting with the excluded instead of going to communion myself or else, walking out of the church in protest.</p>
<p>When we first came to Australia the priest was instrumental in making us feel part of the community. This is not always the case.</p>
<p>My Catholic upbringing was fairly typical. My father is Catholic. My mother is a Catholic convert from the Methodist church and I was the eldest of seven children to be taught by, Good Samaritans,</p>

Loreto and Christian Brothers. My experience is typical of a Catholic school child in the 60s and 70s. I was taught by some lovely religious but also by some brutes. My family were lucky not to be touched by the sexual abuse rife in [ - ] but I have many friends who were not so lucky. I believed when I left high school that I could contribute to the Catholic school system and attended [ - ] under the direction of Rev [ - ]. Throughout my teaching career, I have been a regular parishioner in the school communities I have worked in, in [ - ] and [ - ]. It has always amazed me how we just take for granted these men who have control of the Church through the parishes have earned the right to lead. Many of them haven't. As I come to the end of my teaching career, I look back and know now, that at least 5 of the priests who "earned" their position were abusers on some level. I have been blessed to be part of a vibrant parish with a priest who empowered and inspired. I have seen a parish lift and be the face and hands of God and then I've seen it all undone by the placement of a priest not up to the task. It frustrates me to hear the Church say there are no priests and yet the answers are all too clear. I have faith. My faith is strong but I don't have faith that the Catholic Church will survive. We work with the students in our schools to teach knowledge of the Church and what Jesus' sacrifice means for them but you can't be sure of a welcoming, inclusive and relevant place for them to practise this faith. I am disillusioned. I feel the Church does not meet the needs of the people. It cares more about rituals set up by men hundreds of years ago than the people on its doorstep and it will be its undoing because when my generation is gone, what will be left. My three children all went to Catholic primary and secondary schools and attended Mass regularly until the end of Year 12. I'm sure they'll be back to baptise their kids, but only to get them into Catholic school. This is the reality. This is your doing. And if you take as long to do anything, as the recommendations of Vatican II took, then ... heaven help us!

My fundamental beliefs and values have been shaped thanks to my parents. I'm not sure whether I have grown personally from going to church. But, I have become more informed about Christianity and the teachings of God, by organising numerous events through our youth group. We have had people with a whole range of experiences come to talk to us about everything from just war to gay marriage. And frankly, I learned more through those talks than I did attending church.

I have a very personal story to tell. It is not I that I'm in need of an exorcist but my mother. All documents have been submitted as a requirement for discernment of whether an exorcist is needed. Also meeting with Bishop [ - ] who did listen but did not really listen, or try to understand what was happening and still is happening to her. The late Father [ - ] helped my mother so much he did what he could however the obstacles of the hierarchy of the Church prevented him from performing the prayers of exorcism. Archbishop [ - ] appointed Father [ - ] as an unofficial exorcist for whoever was in need of such things were directed to him. Once the new archbishop came, his appointment was revoked, no longer being able to help people that needed this the most. My mother suffers every day which she offers to God and I believe her suffering was in hope of raising awareness of a need for exorcist in the Church. Father [ - ] is the one who told us what my Mum was afflicted with a malefice. He even came with us to one of the meetings with Bishop [ - ] to help explain what was happening but we were ignored. This made me so very sad as a daughter to know there was nothing more I could do to help my mother as the Church had turned its back on her. Yet every weekend at Mass the Church is asking me for money ... all we were after were some prayers ... please listen and be open and not let your egos get in the way of God's mercy and his reason for giving his only Son who died on the cross for our sins ... so that the Church could be founded as a place on earth for us to receive communion and all its sacraments to help us on our journey and only reason for being here to do what is required to gain entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

One person in our group was a witness to a couple's strong faith which led to the RCIA.

I was interested in starting an Over-50's club for the Church. I drafted a constitution and presented it to the priest. His response was there was a council elders club in the area. Our responsibility is to look after the aged of the parish. We need to care for them as a Church not as a government.

The story tonight in our group was our concern generally about the process of young men who are formed in the seminary where they encounter God in a powerful way and experience the

<p>brotherhood of a Catholic community and the richness of that and then once they are ordained they are appointed to a parish where they are living alone. The sheer volume of tasks on a daily basis can be overwhelming if some communal support is not given. Some of the suggestions were that every parish priest should have a housekeeper/cook employed by the Archdiocese to do some weekly cleaning and cook one main meal a day. This in the first instance provides for the health and well-being of the priest and it also provides some company. This person can be either male or female. Secondly, the choice to marry should be available but we recognise that that is not the main problem regarding the problem of loneliness. If there was a solid infrastructure of support and connection where solid mentoring could occur as the new priest settles in, he would gain confidence and be strengthened and grow through the experience of others. There needs to be a tree of support that reaches back through many branches to the archbishop of the diocese he is in. Thirdly, the issue of alcoholism in priests, acolytes and members of the community raises the question of whether our sacramental wine could be non-alcoholic but we recognise that the issue of contamination being easier to occur if there was no alcohol and the process of sharing the same cup would then become a problem.</p>
<p>How can we best support our young people to live Gospel messages, particularly those who go to Catholic schools? The young are our future; Young people are attending other "churches" and enjoying their services; Young people are taking leadership roles in "other churches"; encourage young people to do "one kind thing" each day to learn/act Christian values; Engage with schools (via skits or music/drama) to take on "kindness and empathy"; We need to find a way to encourage families to attend Mass; Family prayer at meal times and evenings; Educate children to recognize Christian beliefs and values; MOTIVATE young people to participate being "good Christians"; Make good use of schools time and activities; Children and their parents are not coming to Mass; I used to see lots of families at Mass but not now; I want to help schools motivate young people to be good Christians; Children need to be included in a gentle way at Mass.</p>
<p>The Church does not shape people that have already been done by God.</p>
<p>I experienced faith nurturing at [ - ] Cathedral in [ - ] through the beautiful liturgy celebrated there. Sound liturgical practices are vital for faith development and preservation.</p>
<p>I think Mass has become very boring and very frustrating.</p>
<p>I am submitting this information on behalf of our Home cell group which have been meeting for more than ten years. Various members of the group have been on this faith sharing journey through the years and the group leader has been changed as others move on and new members come on board. We follow a format which starts with an Opening prayer, followed by testimony and then we continue with our Bible reading with a discussion on the particular chapter using a Bible with a learning guide. We then conclude with a prayer followed by an afternoon tea. At last month's session, two members were away and hence we had only 8 people participating in our Plenary Council discussion. From the sharing of our individual stories, we find that our parishes are short of parish priests and we as a community would like the Church to work towards retaining our ordained priests especially those who have to leave the Church as they cannot remain celibate. We discussed the issue that God made man and woman where their bodies are made to procreate and we considered if God really demanded that our priests should remain celibate if they want to serve him in their vocation. We have witnessed the loss of some very faithful priests over the years and some although very few have left. We wonder about whether Anglican priests are not as effective as Catholic priests because they can marry and love their wives and families and still love God and serve Him in their vocation? These were some of the things we discussed and we hope that God will enlighten others to dissect this issue further.</p>
<p>I was brought up a Catholic by very "Traditional," conservative parents. By the age of 13, I'd had enough of Catholicism, its priests, brothers and nuns thrashed me and others without mercy on the slightest pretext. Some were intentionally cruel just because they could be. Most of the women at our church were taking the contraceptive pill and were quite open about it. I came from a big family and we were poor so we were looked down on by the congregation. Members of the congregation</p>

were crooks and shonks. My Mum and Dad were always angry at the Church, the Government and the World. I found no Peace in Christ so I left and lived as a pagan for many years. I was happy and successful. Then one day I had a serious industrial accident which smashed up my body quite badly and after which I died twice. I had a post-death experience which was profoundly disturbing and which put me into several months of therapy. One day, coming home from therapy in a taxi I was puzzling over what I had seen and what it all meant and my "head" went very quiet and a small, clear voice said to me, "You know what you saw, you have to make a decision. Be with Me." I got dropped off at my local Catholic church and saw the priest who gave me Confession and I have been a practicing Roman Catholic since (although a poor one at that). Nothing done by the Church in Australia has shaped my Faith. I'd go so far as to say that the Church has done as much as She could to push me away. The adherence of the Church to the ALP, the Culturally-Marxist political party of anti-Family, anti-Life, anti-private property, anti-free-speech, pro-Socialist, pro-Environmental Pantheism, pro-homosexual ideology just sickens me. The disrespect for the Body and Blood of Christ which is not actively discouraged by priests is appalling to me. The priests who don't offer a Mass one or several days of the week who have instituted "Eucharistic Ceremonies" instead, which include the celebrant giving a homily on how he or she interprets the Gospel readings (including one lady who asked us all to pray for the [AFL football team]) are particularly galling to me. The disobedience of priests who continue with general absolution ceremonies, with liturgical dancing, refusal to introduce the revised order of the Mass, refusal to allow a secretive confession, the priests who spend more time at the golf course than at the Altar, the priests with girlfriends and boyfriends are also appalling, as are the several drunks and pot-heads about which nobody appears to be interested. So, the Institutional Church in Australia has done as much as it could to disillusion me and to destroy my Faith, it is only through the continual showering of Grace upon my Soul that I remain faithful.

The challenge to apply the implications of the Sermon on the Mount at the present time, here and now.

Our Prayer group has just celebrated 30 years together and we have been a support to one another from when our children were young to now, when our partners may be leaving this world. We have moved from a charismatic to a faith sharing group and now moving into a more contemplative prayer mode. We also raise money for charity—in our early days by meals and other fund-raising methods, lately by having movie nights and distributing the money to charity. We have a Retreat each year, sometimes funding is helped by the Faith Development Centre.

My experience in the Church has been mostly a very positive one. I have known and befriended a good number of priests and two bishops who have all been wonderful men, totally committed to their vocation and very available and present for the people. I also have befriended many religious some of whom have been inspirational women who have given their lives to God and the Church. I once asked a Religious Sister how does she stay committed to such a flawed Church and her response to me was "God is bigger than the Church" which I can resonate with. I feel very keenly for the people who have suffered at the hands of any priests or nuns as they have been failed by the very people who should have been available to help them with their troubles and hard times but who instead made many bad situations much, much worse.

I have been a life-long Catholic and find great solace in my faith. However, like many others, I have adult children who are no longer active in the practice of the faith. They all drifted away after school or leaving home. "I just don't believe in it anymore," was the usual reason. As much as I pray for them and their return to the faith, at present I feel embarrassed by the Church's reputation in society and by what these (now adult) children would experience if they came to Mass. The sermon is usually unintelligible and, when I can interpret what is being said, not inspiring. The parishioners do not provide a welcoming face. Even those who are connected via the parish school do not cross the carpark to enter the church building. One could become despondent but I have a sense of hope—God is God after all—and I trust that God will not abandon us. I'd just like to see some clearer evidence of God at work in the lives of those I love most.

People are prevented from taking the sacraments. We are taught in the Church that the sacraments are the core to our relationship with God and Salvation. This prevents these people from being closer to God. The process of Divorce is too complicated. We need more support systems for people undergoing divorce. This also affects the children of these people, which means we are preventing generations from being closer to God. These people are in need and need help. The Church should offer help and support, not judge them. The system should be reviewed; more support should be in place (i.e. counsellors, sharing groups). Again, I will stress, is it right to withhold the sacraments?

We have each had both good and uninspiring experiences of liturgies. We each value homilies, which reflected the message of the day's gospel and relate it to our daily lives and personal experiences. We want liturgy which impacts our life and helps us grow in faith and our connection to God. We value children's Liturgy of the Word as a way to include the young in liturgy. Faith experiences of educating a family, Faith experience of educating school children of diverse religions, Faith and life experiences of husband's plane crash in PNG, and getting courage from the love of the people who were mostly strangers. One could see the love of God in each one of them. Faith and life experiences with many hurdles based in life but always having the courage and determination knowing God is always listening. Transparency = truth—too many politics involved, people don't tell the truth, reasons for policies and actions. Also involves saying the right thing but behind it, there is another agenda. The Church must lead us out of this, for example too much talk about people's sexual practice. Is this irrelevant and a distraction? Things we talked about today we did not talk about in the Church for example domestic violence. Attitude in this experience was keep the family together at all costs can lead to suicide. We don't judge people—not on their sexuality, not on their apparent generosity or other but it's important to maintain true teachings about all aspects of the morality including sexuality. We need to judge actions not people but the fruits of those actions. The question is what is good for human thinking for example, one-night stands, hook ups where [the] main conclusion [is] we need to talk about these things openly and transparently and listen with respect. Love all people regardless of faith [or] sexual orientation. Open to listening and sharing with others faith and other ways of thinking. Not thinking that we are always right. To be humble, respecting others, be aware of discrimination, giving preference to people who are better or more richly dressed good-looking people. Tolerance is important. Multicultural Society. What is the Church's answer to gay relationships? Walk in their shoes. How do we guide the youth our children? Influence of media.

Modernise the Church experiences e.g. liturgy that is relevant. Be more inclusive and welcoming. Take the Church to the people. There is too much emphasis on the priest. To provide an environment for the youth in the church services Teach the role of the youth in the Church greater clarity on issues in the Church for youth what the Church believes in and their opinion of these issues. The Church needs to be clearer on the current controversial issues and where Catholics should stand and why they should not support the opinions, for example euthanasia. Find activities for the youth formation. Looking for a Church which is youth connected. When somebody is questioning the premise of God, to share my experiences that to encounter that situation in the presence of God. The Power of the Holy Spirit to have seen a man without hands and feet struggle to enter the bus. A voice entered into my mind to say, look at this man, he doesn't have hands and feet yet he's not complaining but you with hands [and] everything, yet you are still complaining. Also, at finding common ground with people of other faiths in order to move forward. Many different ways to the one God. Also add being strengthened in our Faith through the suffering, being tested, being attracted for our faith. Experiences of receiving encouragement after death of mother by Holy Spirit. Mother was excommunicated after following multiple childbirths. I have worked with drug and alcohol addicts for 14 years and therapist with homeless people for 5 years and people abused in care for 5 years, I was known as the Christian in his work. I went through the process. It was made as difficult as it could be in bureaucratic obstructions and I had to keep pushing the process along. Also, I felt that given that I was acting in good faith and my priest had very little sympathy for my situation. From this, the priest does not need replacement but he does need assistance with his

mission. Opening of the Church to new ways of doing things. Passed down the family each generation but it comes to a dead end. Workplace has developed from being static to being caring and compassionate but not Church. Other churches seem to be more welcoming, dynamic, community-minded. People need to feel the presence of God in their lives to feel more part of the Mass and any devotions. My son does not practice any religion so it's a struggle in our Faith and my youngest daughter is practicing but not regularly. Got married to a Catholic and part of the charismatic group. Critical condition led to faith. Grew in faith because family supported and a personal encounter with God. Personal encounter with God by reading Bible and praise and worship. Grew in faith by going to Catholic school. Born into a family with one parent atheist and one Catholic parent. The Atheist parent supported the faith. Being born into the Catholic family.

Although it is not technically an experience I have personally undertaken, the priest (Father [ - ]) that celebrates Mass at my school is an exceptionally amazing person. His words and attitude enliven me and positions me to enjoy taking part in services, and his personality invites Mass to be somewhere extremely open and welcoming of anyone and everyone. I am so glad I have been lucky enough to meet him, as he has played a big part in my religious journey and experiences.

I have been particularly fortunate to attend a Catholic school. I am encouraged to seek God more. But my main experience of faith has occurred and is occurring in my church, which is Pentecostal. I believe that God can touch an individual anywhere.

I was part of a youth group at my parish in my late teens. It was the only place my parents would let me go on the weekend! It became such a fun and interesting part of my life. The other teenagers there are still my friends today—that's over 30 years ago now. I am now the Head of Religious Education at a Catholic girls' school and work with teenagers just like I was. I want them to find Christ as I did—in the young people around them. It was very formative and shaped my life. These young people are so aware of justice issues and feel strongly about the environment. If you want to capture the youth, this is the way to do it.

(I do not adhere to Catholicism as I did when I was a young child.) My experiences of Religion and Life ATAR in secondary school has been extremely positive, opening my eyes to the religious identities of others. One negative experience which has shaped the way I view Christianity as a whole was a Year 9 Incursion from a Christian organisation called [ - ], which presented a very fearmongering talk about how women who abort feel immense guilt and which taught us how to dress modestly to avoid male attention. This organisation presented in a way which degraded women and encouraged guilt, creating my personal criticisms of the way Christianity operates in education. The Catholic response to same-sex-marriage also shaped the way I view Catholicism as I perceived some of the Vote No campaigns as hateful and misinformed.

#### EDUCATION OF MASS

- ppl leave church early because they don't understand the depth of Mass.
- Need to have an understanding of Mass to be engaged.
- Must come to Mass first. How do we do this?
- Need to pull ppl in. Very easy to talk as practising Catholics.
- Explain parts of Mass, during Mass.
- Explanations regarding Mass are very good in our church bulletin.
- Events, such as WYD for catechesis to help understand Mass further.
- How do we connect people on the fringes? Ppl only hear bad press.
- Prayer needs to invite ppl in.
- Create a Catholic radio station.
- We don't understand and yet accept. How do we understand what we are doing?
- We need to saturate the joy of our Church in as many ways as possible.
- Some structures already in place, e.g. The Record.
- Sharing (PR) outside Catholic circles but should come from a Catholic perspective.
- Going out as individuals to evangelise more through actions, not so much words.
- We need to be actively emphatic in the treatment of people. Create a sense of belonging.

- Need sincerity and integrity, not just "token" welcoming rituals.
- Our parish priest does an amazing job at explaining things in the bulletin.
- Archbishop uses pastoral letters to provide great guidance for the tough issues.

My personal recommendations to Australia Plenary Council Thank you for the opportunity for me as a proud Catholic and an Australian, to have my voice heard in the Australia Plenary Council. My recommendations can be summarised into one sentence "To bring Catholicism closer to the reality in the rapidly changing society in Australia, by readjusting our attitude and actions, and doing evangelisation by example." In details, I divide into three parts:

1. Church responsiveness against public's enquiries. Often times, emails from public (even parishioners) were ignored by the Church. The priests might be old and not technology savvy, but answering emails (or other forms of communication) shows that Catholic takes care of the society. Solution: HIRE a part time (work from home) administrator.
2. Church professionalism in serving society. Often times the toilet cleanliness in the church does not meet the standards. Church relies heavily on the volunteers towards important stuffs like church cleaning and church gardening. Solution: HIRE professional cleaners/gardeners.
3. Evangelisation by example. Often times, at Catholic schools, public roads are blocked by parents who drop off/pick up their children. This situation is worse than other public schools. This certainly creates negative image towards Catholic, which is the opposite of evangelisation. Solution: FORBID drive-thru drop off or pick up at school at all times. God bless Australia. [ - ], PhD.

As a practising Catholic, I would like to see that our uniqueness of Confession still continues. How many times do we have to go to confession to confess our repetitive small sins like being not listening to parents or friends' advice or being rude or swearing? As human, it is very difficult to [stop] swearing or being difficult when our morals or ethics or point of view is challenged. However, if someone goes to confession for killing, raping, physical violence. These are not small sins, these are major sins that has harmed or taken one or more of someone's life. If it still persists and continues on, it is a cry for help. These perpetrators and Victims and priest need help in How To GET help. Our Christian faith/God asks us to love our neighbour, to adhere to justice and show compassion, mercy and provide help. Help need be provided in confession. These must come in the form of support and help provided especially to priest who comes in contact with perpetrators and victims of abuse, rape, violence. Priests need to be aware when faced with perpetrators and Victims they have a guideline to approach these subjects. So real and healthy and proactive help is given instead of giving perpetrators and Victims a set of 'Hail Marys' and 'Our Father' as penance. Empowerment to priest to get access to a Supportive Catholic Group who can help the perpetrators and Victims.

My experience from 'Church' (the institution NOT the people) has left me continually asking—is this what Jesus had in mind? If scripture and homilies are the key guides to gospel values and living a good life—then it is the homilies that need major transformation. If this cannot be delivered, parish by parish in a meaningful and enlightening way in the current format—maybe technology and high quality 'conversations' about the relevance of scripture in modern families and society—by PowerPoint? Medicine, politics and education rely on the quality of the operatives at the 'coal face'—this is even truer in religion.

I am an 80-yr-old retired carpenter. I have lived and practiced my faith in the same parish since we married over 50 years ago. It is a parish where the good men and women of the parish conduct the everyday worldly business of the parish allowing the priests to concentrate on the spiritual life of the parish. I was not aware that our parish was an exception until as a member of SVDP visited other parishes talking to fellow members telling me what Father likes and doesn't like and a few parish priests in conversation saying repeatedly my church, my parish. My immediate family is three sons and three granddaughters. Unfortunately, my wife and I find ourselves in the same boat as a lot of our friends that is we are now the only practicing Catholics in the family. My sons and the people they mix with seem to be respectable good loyal family people.

To questions I have asked of these people at various times, some were not worth a second thought but the ones I still remember has me questioning my own faith. The following are the questions and a composition of the answers I got engaging with different lapsed Catholic people at various times.

Q. You boys went to a good Catholic school that taught you good Christian values, why do none of you go to church?

A. I suppose the others came to the same conclusion as me that the Catholic Church values and the values that Christ gave us by teaching and example are the negative and positive of Christian values. I chose to adopt positive Christian values and not the values of a materialistic Catholic Church.

Q. That is a bit over the top. How can you say that?

A. You have to learn the true history of the Church to learn the difference between the Church's values and the values Christ gave us. I have travelled through Europe as a tourist visiting some great palaces that once belonged to Church leaders. Once having a guided tour of what was a prince bishop's palace I asked "why the Massive entry doors?" I was told that allowed the prince bishop's carriage access to the undercover entry at the bottom of the stairs. Next comment from one of my tour group was he must have been a very fit man to climb all those stairs. The answer we got was he didn't have to, he sat in an enclosed chair and four strong men carried him up and down. Most of the Church leader's priorities then were me first, the Church second, and God created the faithful to serve us. This mindset is still happening in many parishes today.

Q. What do you think the Plenary Council will achieve?

A. Like most people I know who are aware of what is happening, know the final outcome judged by the bishops and a couple of the laity for window dressing. It will most likely be a case of the judges judging the judges and will change little or nothing.

The role of the laity in the Church: We need to break down the BARRIERS between the laity and the clergy. We need education for lay people in every parish.

1. I have seen so much plastic build up in the environment. The Church needs to teach us all how to respect the environment. The Church should be encouraging us how to marshal all our resources—not to produce too many children—look at the earth and see how it is being abused. I don't see Christians and Catholics making a difference.

2. My personal story of Catholic life—I'm a traditional Catholic from birth. In the 1970's, I noticed a void in my life but didn't know what it was. My husband and I would go and listen to lots of speaker and different events and talks. In 1973, we went to the Eucharistic Congress in Melbourne. Before we left, we both prayed together that we would find something tangible for us. At the Congress, we met some people "The Focolare Movement"—essentially to bring unity and to live the Gospel, to be turned into action—every encounter is with Jesus—to love Jesus in the other person. The decision to make in your life is to love—that's how the Gospel can change your life by making a practical or concrete experience of it.

3. If I go to a Mass and the bishop is there, it is a distraction for me with his special robes and cap, etc. I would like to talk to the bishop at our level and come and listen to the people. Some admin stuff should be left to the admin people and then they (bishops, priests) can come and listen to us. They need to come down to our level and be one of us and relate to the younger generation more.

Being a Catholic is seen as very separated from society, rather than a single community.

We are constantly challenged to change our traditional 'attitudes' to a more contemporary one, reflecting the modern times. We are focussing on monetary things rather than love and peace. Our strict laws of the Church prohibit the youth from involving themselves. We are judgemental on many fronts—LGBTQI community, same-sex marriage, euthanasia, abortion, etc.

Having discussions that anyone from another denomination or other religion would not go to heaven—this is unsettling. Transition from Latin to English—some of feel that somethings are lost in

the translation. Living TOO MUCH in the traditional and past mindset that priests have forgotten the reality of today's world.

Many young people don't want to follow blindly or don't know why the Church is AGAINST things. Preaching does not tackle relative topics that the youth are concerned about.

A strong faith is often cultivated in one's youth, and in recent years, it is evident there are people, mostly teenagers, who's faith in God falters or fails. The youth are a core part of the Church and it is vital that we are there for them. Youth actually want to learn more about God—need to engage them meaningfully.

Every church should have a person that the youth/adults can talk to and go for advice—other than the priests. More youth should be involved in the church—including reading the scriptures.

There is lack of engagement of youth in the Masses. Activities in the church need to be more than what we currently have.

The other "Christian churches" have more attractions there—Music, Bands, Sharings, Food, Dancing, etc. No/very little interaction between the priest and the youth—even after Mass.

I grew up always going to church with my family and it was a great time. When I left home, I left the Church for a bit torn between whether I was attending church because I grew up that way and it was in my blood and if I actually wanted to attend. Ultimately I got back in through playing music through certain groups around [ - ] in church, feeling that I did want to be a part of the Church. After doing the rounds with a few music groups playing at lots of churches, once I bought a house and settled in [ - ], I became the music coordinator for a great new young church playing most weeks. I married a non-practicing Baptist woman who comes regularly with me but keeps telling me she does not want to become Catholic. Between her and the kids we now have a lot of my views of the Church have been changed. She regularly comes with the kids and we both find the church a fantastic environment for the kids but it has taught me that the Church and faith cannot always come first, the values, beliefs, the community and family of the Church is amazing but if you can't make more time and effort for your family to live your life and enjoy, then you have no life to promote those beliefs and values. This is why all this opens up interesting doors for me. I believe we need more balance and we will get a healthy happier Church.

We had a wonderful parish priest. His humility, willingness to serve, selflessness and compassion changed my life at a time when I was considering looking for an alternative parish or maybe even denomination. He was so welcoming and made every person in our large parish feel important to God. He was so understanding towards families and made every child feel important. He wasn't stern if they made a noise and we had 120 altar servers. He worked hard to make Mass relevant to everyone. He was a great motivator of people and because of the way he radiates the love of Christ people wanted to be involved. He is my spiritual advisor and friend. We keep him in touch even though they moved him over 100 km away from our parish. He still makes himself available to people if they need him. Many regularly drive the distance to see him. He taught me that humility, gentleness, patience and love are the key to closeness to Jesus. He always said it was our parish, not 'my' parish. It made such a difference. Unfortunately, he was compulsorily transferred after a long time in our parish. Priests who are part of the parish community, not set apart from the community make such a difference. He taught me not to be judgemental due to his example. Our parish was so enriched by him. We miss him greatly.

I have 2 children who still attend church and 2 who do not. I see no real difference in the behaviour of the ones who do not attend church—they don't party any harder, drink any more. They still look after their younger siblings, and still have a pretty good moral compass. Sadly, I can't see much difference between them. And the only reason my younger kids still attend is because they know it's important to me. And I feel embarrassed that this is the case—because I can't see any reason why

they should. They don't get anything out of church. It doesn't engage them, feed them, encourage them or support them. The music is bland (or played off CDs). Preaching is incomprehensible. The joke the priest insists on telling every week "to make people smile" ranges from sexist to anti-Semitic. When I asked my teenagers what two things they would change to make church better, they said "priests that speak English", "better music" and "no jokes". But most importantly, I am concerned that the only thing that my children think Church is, is Sunday Mass. They don't see Church as community (because they don't feel connected). They don't feel that they are Church (they "go to church"). They don't feel that they have a voice or have a role to play. Going to church shouldn't be entertaining—but it should be engaging. And it should not be seen as an end-point. People should go TO church so they can be supported, fed, engaged and encouraged to BE Church. Lay people don't "have a role" in the Church—they ARE the Church. It is the clergy that "have a role" and that role is not to run the Church, or rule the Church, or speak on behalf of the Church. The role of the clergy is to enable the Church to be Church. It is to support, serve, animate, encourage (and sometimes challenge), empower, upskill people so that they can better do what they are called to be. The Church is "a people in unity" (without division between lay/cleric), and it is the Church—that is, this gathered and united people—which is charged with the task of proclaiming and establishing the Kingdom of God. I don't see this happening—and I certainly don't see this for my kids. And I think THIS is what God is asking of the Church in Australia (and everywhere) right now (and has always asked of it).

Younger

- Parents would force them to go to church.
- Inconvenient when you have other things to do.
- Negative view Church classes.
- Younger, didn't like having to go there, liked it.
- Meet other kids from other primary schools;

Younger

- No family background in Catholicism, don't mind going now Tradition in family.
- Family oriented.

Since being a young boy, I have a sense of wonder and thankfulness at the good people who turn up to Mass and other parish things and contribute when tasks are shared. This includes the solid faith of those in country places where long trips to offer Mass in a school room marked them out in the spirit of 'Faith of our Fathers'. Today I praise God for young families—the Mums and Dads with their little ones (the bigger ones aren't often there!) rocking up and taking their part while looking after the kids with chases to the sanctuary, to crying, to bottles, to leaving for toilet breaks—a simple fidelity and goodness in this—half combed hair, t-shirts, kids pinching each other around their parents backs, All in their Father's house. A new attractor seems needed now—we have lost some of the old certainties and 'father knows best' kind of listening—people read and hear more about Church affairs (although sadly not the Gospel and its meanings along with understanding the history and writing of these words). We don't stand out as the fish-on-Friday gang like before when we stood back from the snags at the Fri BBQ = and older folk are alongside the younger families in the faithfulness of this ongoing story—almost a miracle of active grace. And priests have selflessly served in all these places and manners. Now this must be seen as a conscious and dedicated community of people who take the Kingdom of God as the target for our aspirations—they have done it, they still do it, but it can be reinvigorated and new ways of seeing things should not alienate oldies, (sensitivity, discussion, gentle propositions), nor make 'new' thinkers see themselves as the 'real' Christians of our time. We have a tradition, it is good to remember it (and Mary Mckillop lived this in the country and in schools and convents and city and bush)—the spark is alive—nurture it and offer openness to all comers.

I believe there are two types of Catholics in our Church today. (I do not include the lapsed Catholics). The Catholic who goes to Mass on Sundays or sometimes, rocks up to communion and rarely goes to

<p>confession, and the Catholic Catholics, who are often daily Mass-goers and have had an enriching experience of God. I am the latter.</p>
<p>We need to broaden our views of making people feel welcome. For too long, many priests have use guilt to make people go to Mass. This just makes them stay away even more. We have lost our core focus of engaging people.</p>
<p>I have learnt to follow what I understand are the teachings of the Church and be happy with them. They seem to have a logic, but we now have people wanting to be "Trendy" and change the teachings to suit the modern worlds trends of Gay Rights and Sexual Freedoms. Some of these may be Man-Made Institutions but some have sound logic for Mankind's Future.</p>
<p>Many instances of non-listening.          * No diocesan council or structure to talk with local bishop.          * This year leading Jesuit forbidden to speak in [ - ].          * Retired Bishop [ - ] not welcome in some dioceses. Public figures with Catholic formation and sometimes supportive of much of Catholic life vilified for their gender / sexual orientation.          * What sort of listening will the bishops practice and will there be dialogue over areas of disagreement?</p>
<p>In the late eighties, I joined a youth group. All of us participated in the "Life in The Spirit" seminars. We were invited to commit our lives to God and have a personal relationship with Jesus. Later on, our priest taught us how to meditate and we formed small core groups (All male or all female). We were invited to ask one another questions about our prayer life and were encouraged to journal and have regular spiritual direction with our priest (A Carmelite). This experience had a great impact on my faith journey and has continued until today (Some thirty years later). I would have liked my own children to have had this opportunity and to experience the depth of God's love for them as individuals. Without my faith, I would have been very lost and unable to cope with life and the struggles that have come my way. I feel it would be beneficial for young adults to receive the sacrament of confirmation when they are older and able to understand what it means to have God as the centre of one's life.</p>
<p>In spite of knowing how far we have drifted from our Catholic faith, the special edition of the Record did not have a picture prominently of baby Jesus and his parents on the front cover and the kind of love He came into the world to show us. If our Religious have drifted so far away, is there a future for the Church? I have my doubts if something is not done and done fast. We need to see some evidence of change—there is no evidence of it so far.</p>
<p>Continuation of the above ... Members of the group questioned whether priests' training made them doctrinally rigid, without any real experience of the transforming love of God and whether they had little to offer to others and little passion to sustain a life-giving ministry. Perhaps those who come to train as priests are already rigid in their thinking about the nature of God, their vocation and what holiness is. It seems that this is accepted and accentuated by their training, and they are allowed to go onto ordination—which would vindicate them to continue on the same path. Is there appropriate psychological scrutiny? With so few men seeking to become priests, are bishops accepting unsuitable candidates? The problem with this approach is that it is no way of fulfilling Jesus' mandate to preach the gospel. For the Church to be able to do this, its leaders must stop trying to protect themselves, the institution and its structures. The purpose of the gospel has always been to build the kingdom so that the little ones, the marginal and powerless ones are touched by an infinite love that restores them to their sacred dignity. The Church needs to work out its purpose as and will continue to lose or attract both ministers and congregations accordingly.</p>
<p>No. I just see that at 60 years of age, when I enter a church for Mass, I lower the average age by several decades. Where is the Church going to be when the current hierarchy passes to its eternal reward? Who will lead our faith in the future? Will it be left to those attempting to maintain traditions/beliefs and dogma from a historical perspective, widening the gulf between Church and faithful or one that takes reintroduces the Church to the Church?</p>

<p>Our experience with a married deacon has been very positive. The fact that he is married and has had children helps us to have a very positive connection with him. The struggles that we experience as a family, he has experienced. We feel far more comfortable talking to him than our priest who comes from an Asian culture and doesn't understand what life for us is about.</p>
<p>Being Mary in my school nativity play was a formative time for me, and I have understood faith since.</p>
<p>The Church has helped me understand the meaning of turbulent times.</p>
<p>God answered my prayers during a very difficult time.</p>
<p>The power of prayer in a community has really helped our family after the near loss and permanent disability of our daughter.</p>
<p>I don't have a story I would like to share.</p>
<p>I think that going to a Catholic school has helped me to stay within the Catholic faith and has also helped me feel comfortable enough to question some things associated with the Church whilst still feeling strong in my personal faith.</p>
<p>My parents and my school experience shaped my faith and commitment—not my parish.</p>
<p>My faith has been strengthened by continually witnessing acts of service of the Church—its kindness and generosity to those in need.</p>
<p>I became a Catholic later in life. I feel a little let down by the school I work in. Catholic in theory, not in practice.</p>
<p>Respect for the Church has dropped over the years because it seems to have lost the strength it used to and has posed too many problems with the current climate.</p>
<p>I feel the message is good. I have grown less convinced that there is an actual intervening God. There is more evidence against that reality. I don't like 'not so nice' people who hide behind their faith. I have worked with many and I'm offended by them.</p>
<p>World Youth Day, Sydney, 2008. Seeing the sun rise over the 100,000 pilgrims from all over the world with flags waving and everyone singing just hit me so hard, like I was a part of something special and bigger than myself.</p>
<p>Working at a school, the community feel inside the school and the unity and understanding this brings between people.</p>
<p>A parish priest can either make or break a person in regards to their faith and support of the Catholic Church.</p>
<p>Attended Catholic schooling in both Primary and High school. Gave me a sense of identity, belonging, developed my faith journey and relationship with God. Helped me develop strong morals and a strong sense of right from wrong. Empathy for others.</p>
<p>I was despairing of my son's behaviours and attitude. It was Lent and during the reading the line "Do not despair ..." It was a reminder to me to place my trust in God and I placed my burden in his hands and not looked back.</p>
<p>I went to Mass at low point in my life. It was a Saturday vigil Mass one Easter. I uncontrollably cried throughout the Mass. Not one person reached out to me and I left the Mass alone and did not return to that parish. This shaped my disillusion—where was the love of Jesus in that community. After a lengthy stay away from the Church, I have since moved to a different parish. I feel more accepted but still feel that my family stands out because I am there with my children, without a husband. The Church needs to change their leadership and the views they push to the Church community.</p>
<p>I grew up in a loving family surrounded by values and love. My parents were not necessarily practising Catholics but welcomed everyone and anyone into our home. They supported us children when we wanted to attend Mass weekly and attend youth groups. As an adult, I have lived my life with morals and values. Showing kindness and acceptance to others. Teaching that to my children too. However, in my later life, the Church beliefs have tested me due to my personal circumstances (Marriage breakup beyond my control) changing. I do not feel a sense of belonging or acceptance by the Church.</p>

My faith has been formed by the strong foundation provided to me by my parents and enriched by the knowledge and faith formation I received by attending Catholic schools and going to church regularly. My faith journey has been further nurtured by my belonging to the [ - ] Young Salesians and being part of a community of young people who believe in God and embrace his message as well as individuals who are in a place where they are questioning their beliefs and the teachings of the Church. My understanding of Christ's message has been deepened through studies at [university] and professional development I experienced in the diocese of [ - ]. My understandings about the priorities of the Catholic Church have been shaped by reading papal encyclicals and studying Social Justice Teaching. My faith has been challenged by being a staff member in a Catholic school, where I regularly feel like an outsider. It is further challenged when leadership positions are given to people for whom Catholic identity does not seem a priority. I hear from other Catholic staff that they feel judged and fearful as a staff member in a Catholic school because of the way they live their life. I feel sad when other staff voice that they cannot share what is going on in their life because they feel it will not be accepted, even when it doesn't even seem to be contrary to Church teachings. When an Irish Catholic teacher questions whether she will even baptise her child because of her experience as a teacher in Catholic schools in Australia, we must be doing something wrong. We need to make the Church more welcoming to Catholic school staff so they can feel more fully a member of the Catholic Church and share God's message with children more honestly. This does not need to require a shift in what the Church believes, just in the way it delivers and enforces what it believes.

When I have read and listened to Catholic conversion stories/videos on the internet, apologetics etc. other articles that counter the falsehood that has been perpetrated on the Catholic Church and its teachings, my faith has only deepened further. We think that an effective dedicated mass communication is needed for the Catholic standpoint. Most people are too busy to find the truth, and opinions are easily swayed by negative publicity. So effective mediums are needed to explain the truth.

I came from Indonesia 10 years ago and felt warmly welcomed by Australian Catholics ever since. We, Australian Catholic should continue wholeheartedly welcome our fellow Catholics from overseas who want to be on a pilgrimage with us here to our heavenly Father's home.

My story is as above and is an absolute bitter one. My experience has completely destroyed every semblance of faith I had in me.

In 2008, our parish was invited to take part in a Pilot of a parish-based, family-focused school supported sacramental Program being developed by our Archdiocese, in line with recommendations by the ACBC. Up until that time, our parish children and Catholic school children were being prepared by the school/PREP teachers and the sacraments were being held in class groups with very minimal input from the parish community. Very few of our Catholic school families were attending Sunday Mass in the parish and when parents had to come to the parish office for any reason, they were very wary and uncomfortable (I was parish secretary at the time). The initial years of the new parish-based program were tricky and there was quite a bit of resistance from parents and parishioners to the changes that were introduced in line with the recommendations of the bishops. However, 10 years later, the program has seen a great change in the connection of school parents to the parish, the acceptance by the parishioners and in the school/parish relationship. Parents come quite happily to the Masses and meetings required by the program and contribute to the parish community by helping at social events, providing food, etc. They feel part of the community, even if they are not bringing their children to Mass every week and we get to know them as we should and have the opportunity to witness the Good News to them. The program gives these parents the opportunity and the permission to discuss their faith with their child, to listen to talks and to experience good liturgy and receive the sacraments themselves, within the parish community; and I have seen parents deeply moved by each of these aspects at different times. The success of the parish-based sacramental program in our parish has come at a cost in both monetary terms and in the amount of effort expended by a lot of dedicated people, but it has revealed to me that Spirit-

<p>guided programs can change lives and change communities. Our parish has just finished its first Alpha Program, again at some considerable cost of time, effort and money. But it bore fruit and I look forward to saying, in 10 years' time, that it was worth every cent and every bit of energy expended. I pray that the bishops will continue to promote and encourage the development of these kinds of programs which are built on the wisdom of those who have the knowledge and experience, but which can be implemented by ordinary Catholics in the parish environment to create disciples for Christ's Church.</p>
<p>In the past, our parish had youth Masses which encouraged young people to come along. This encouraged the youth of [ - ] to join in and be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Now the Masses are all the same and don't cater for different generational needs.</p>
<p>As a collective group we believe that our passion and connection within the Church has lessened since we left school. We feel as though the homilies shared are not always relevant to the lives we live. Often, we question ourselves and our beliefs and in the eyes of the Church our personal thoughts are often looked down upon.</p>
<p>Churches to bring back the Children's Liturgy. Sisters/brothers/priests to get more involved with the school. Encourage children's choir.</p>
<p>I was married in a civil ceremony in Australia, at a Professional Development day at my workplace. I was told that in the eyes of the Catholic Church, my civil marriage was not deemed a marriage. Unfortunately, the marriage has ended and even though I was not married in a Catholic Church and was not recognised in eyes of the Catholic Church, I still have to organise and arrange an annulment. I think this is confusing and contradicting. With the changes in Australian Marriage Laws, I wonder how the Catholic Church will continue to be accepting of all of God's children.</p>
<p>We have found that when priests have more relatable contemporary experiences, they are able to deliver the messages and teachings of the Gospel in a connected, real and meaningful way!</p>
<p>My nanna was the one that brought God to the family. My dad, during a childhood was the atheist. Through his life's journey, he is now a believer and his take on religion is one to question whereas going to a Catholic school, we as kids just accepted.</p>
<p>Church services are currently unpopular due to not being engaging/ meaningful and people are turning away from the Church, especially the young people in the community.</p>
<p>I have received a Catholic educational upbringing and now am evangelizing the next generation.</p>
<p>I was raised in a non-religious household. My experiences with Church came later in life, and I was often turned away by the mentality of "do these things—jump through these hoops—and you will be saved." I have actually come to see that many people are living Jesus-centred lives outside the Church. I believe Church needs to continually be reminded to place Jesus at its centre.</p>
<p>I would not be part of the Church today if I had not been welcomed into youth groups when I was a teenager.</p>
<p>As a young professional in Catholic Education, I have experienced a discrimination against my relationship and living situations. I had been previously told to keep my mouth shut as other members of the Church may not be accepting of the way I live.</p>
<p>The Church in Australia over my lifetime has changed and not for the better. Socially we are trying to be more like the world but losing what the Church has held so dear.</p>
<p>As a Religious Education teacher, inside the classroom I aim to show how God is a source of strength, hope, and ultimately love. God wants to help and it's important that the hearts of all remain open. Outside of the classroom, I am involved with Catholic youth where I have the opportunity to speak to them about issues relating to young people of the Church, while sharing my own testimony and experiences as a young person of the Church.</p>
<p>I have had times in my life that I haven't attended church, but when I have come back, what has drawn me back is receiving Eucharist and of coming home.</p>
<p>As a child, I was made to go to church, but as an adult, I left the Church. It was not until I met another faith-filled person that I felt I needed to return to worship in an outward manner. Evangelisation of the faith is important to the growth of people.</p>

<p>How has the world we live in shaped you? I was a very unconfident child. My self-belief grew through my musical abilities. When I had hard times/struggles in my teenage years, I relied on my output of singing at church as a way to switch off and bring peace to my life. When I left school, I was heading in a different occupational direction, to be hairdresser. My favourite part of this job was when the children would come in. I left this occupation and found other pathways to get into uni to become an early childhood teacher. I was drawn strongly to children, and while studying, I was married and had my own children. I am now a teacher and love incorporating music and song into my class and how I teach students about religion.</p>
<p>As a mum of two teenage boys, it is hard to get them to see the value of our religion. Giving them real life experiences is hard but both boys' schools are trying to do this by offering service learning experiences. This is something the Church needs to do.</p>
<p>My experience of faith—through challenging times, my faith has been my rock, even when it has been hard to keep the faith. Through the community of the Church, I have experienced support, acceptance and the development of valuable friendships and a feeling of belonging. As part of the community, I have felt I have been able to contribute what I can to those in need.</p>
<p>Having breast cancer in 2004, and since been cleared of it, I always wake up early each day thinking how lucky I am that I am still here. I love going to church, praying and being relaxed in a beautiful atmosphere.</p>
<p>Papal visit (JP II) to Australia—pride in being Catholic and demonstrating our faith—not feeling that this is something that only takes place on a Sunday within a closed community—sharing the faith.</p>
<p>A member of our group will shortly undertake the sacrament of Marriage and would like to celebrate this sacrament in a setting of their choice, connecting their lives and their relationship to God in a meaningful and relevant way. The member of our group has been informed by their priest that this is not possible and will not get approved because both people are Catholic. We feel that this is unrealistic in the modern world when people are willing to continue their relationship with God.</p>
<p>One of our group members shared a story of her experience with divorce and inclusivity within the Church. Her parents needed to have a priest write to the Pope for them to receive dispensation to be able to receive communion at Mass. Another member shared that her Mother was a widow and wasn't welcomed into the Church if she was to remarry. Some of these rules need to be reviewed as we believe Jesus would not act and believe in this way.</p>
<p>In reference to the Royal Commission: It is important to LISTEN to our children ... walk in others shoes when they have experienced trauma. Exhaust every avenue ...</p>
<p>The group highlighted the challenges facing the Church at this time. Australia is a society that "does not talk about God". How then can we make God part of the youth's life? (Matt 5:14–16) The youth have psychological characteristics [that] include a high level of imagination and the need to: belong to a group; be listened to, accepted and respected; be free explore and experience excitement cum pleasure rather than be bored; make meaning out of many aspects of life; and seek answers to many existential questions that sometimes make them worry. There is an observable disconnect between school, work and social activities, and spiritual life in relationships with the Church. Why then do we want the youth to be religious and belief in God? Matt 11:28–30 ... "come to be all who laboured and are heavy laden and I will give you rest; Matt 18:2–14. Considering the psychological profiles of the youth and the contemporary challenges, we recommend the following strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Social Media: The Church has to use social media such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, to connect, establish, and maintain contact with the existing youth in the Church through daily messages of biblical passages and homily that connects and empowers the youth with life challenges such as their study, personal and family social life.</li> <li>2) Sporting Activities: the scheduling of Sporting activities including the practice and competitions is often on Saturdays and Sundays. Days that conflict with the weekend church attendance and religious activities participation. The Church has to become actively involved in sporting activities in order to ensure that the youth are able to engage in contemporary activities while growing in</li> </ol>

<p>knowledge of God and faith (Matt 7:15–20).</p> <p>3) Involve the youth in Outreach activities for corporal work of mercy on weekdays just in the same way just like Pokémon.</p> <p>4) Use of Music Ministry to involve the youth is essential. The music combined with various activities such as dancing and training may align with the youth's need for exercise related experience and growth.</p> <p>5) Encourage the youth to read about the Church teachings in a group, and ask questions while directing them to the biblical source and the Church traditions. Finally we concluded that “unless the Lord builds, the builder builds in vain” (Psalm 127: 1; 1 Corinth 3;6).</p>
<p>Our experience of faith is strongly linked to ethnicity. Since Australia is now a “melting pot” of cultural identities, our faith is now fragmented. Our challenge is now more about preserving a version of faith that our Australian children can recognise and access into the future. So that traditions are a part of their identity as much as it was ours.</p>
<p>I am blessed to have had formation from the Church via community experiences of Antioch, Catholic parish Youth, YCW and Impact ministries (now operating as “The Catholic Guy” ministries). Without the gift of the formation teachings, worship and experiences. Church through the 9.30 Mass would not have sustained myself or numerous others, yet such formation opportunities are few and far between. There is often a large gulf between Religious Education and coming to know God.</p>
<p>I was raised an Anglican and converted to Catholicism after going through an RCIA program about 10 years ago.</p>
<p>Raised in a family, attended church every Sunday and now teaching in a Catholic school, do not attend weekly but float back and forth as I feel I want.</p>
<p>I was in Years 10–12 at Vatican II I have seen so many changes over these years. I was so angry in my 20s. And did not darken the church doors. I do practice my faith now but I am not what you would consider a “classic” Catholic. I have a gay nephew with a lovely long-term partner. He epitomizes a kind, loving person. Yet his lifestyle is demonized by my local priest. My three children were raised Catholic yet none of them goes to church.</p>
<p>A caring community and loving family have shaped me. A priest who agreed to officiate at the marriage of our son in an outdoor setting has inspired me. A caring community who provided meals, prayers and help during a difficult pregnancy shaped me.</p>
<p>I have been brought up as an Australian Italian Catholic with all the wonderful prayers, traditions, Marian, sacraments and see the relevance of Church in a world that is broken and needing Jesus' healing so badly. I have had my struggles too accepting God's will in my life—I do not believe in sex before marriage, or contraception and the challenge God has given me is to not be able to have children with my husband. We could have easily had children with IVF but being pro-life could never have chosen that as an option. Because we saw this as God's plan for us we accepted his Holy Will. We waited for 11 years to adopt and although we were highly approved, our age prevented that happening. But my mother's faith and my upbringing have meant my daily experiences of Christ strengthen me in all things. I feel that most colleagues don't know/understand the teaching of the Church and why the Church has these rules ... I have been blessed to see how the Church is such a comfort and refuge and strength, particularly in its sacraments.</p>
<p>Ok. My marriage was annulled. I met a wonderful man but we were not allowed to marry in the Church because he had to have an annulment even though he wasn't Catholic! 20 years later, we are still happily married but I am sad that these ridiculous rules hindered me celebrating my marriage in my faith. They are ridiculous, antiquated rules.</p>
<p>[ - ] (15 years old) gave an account of his experience at a Catholic school that he attends. His account—“As a year 9 student at a Catholic College, I often feel uncomfortable about openly sharing my faith. Faced with social challenges about being Catholic in my life, I feel as though when I am spending my day at Catholic school (CC), I don't feel comfortable talking about being Catholic. I have many friends but only a minority are Catholic and even out of that minority, I still feel that I can only openly talk about my religion to very few. In my opinion, it should be necessary for teenagers to feel</p>

comfortable to be able to talk about their faith in a comfortable and safe environment, as being a teenager is one of the most important stages in the building a healthy religion for their future in the Church. In conclusion, I think the Catholic colleges should introduce and advertise more youth groups, as much as possible as it is a great space for younger ages people to attend, play games, meet other people, and at the same time be able to openly share their faith and receive advice from those who have experience in building healthy faith."

A lady shared her faith experience and of growing up in the Church. The strong call that she had to live a life for the Lord. She is now in mission with her family in Australia.

Spreading the Word of God;

- God uses us—the Church—to invite everyone to the church. We as believers ought to overcome the fear to proclaim our faith to others. We need to recognise that we are all playing a part in someone else's journey.

- Respecting other people's views but realising and understanding that Jesus is our Almighty God.

- Often other people see Church as restrictive. This notion is a barrier that needs to be lifted up so that we all can positively spread the word thus showing the nurturing capacity of the Church.

After a misled youth and mid-part of my life, I had a mid-life rebirth at a time when I had reached a spiritual rock-bottom ... an overwhelming experience of the Holy Spirit and many days in bed crying and feeling the sorrow for where I was. I was prompted to pick up the New Testament and found myself in the Acts of the Apostles. I couldn't put it down and worked through the Epist. Started reading Saints stories, etc. and ended up revisiting the local Catholic church, which had changed at that time from my memories. Over the years ahead, I increased my faith and involvement in the parish and became an Acolyte. Following a pilgrimage to Medjugorie in 1987, I found the books that the bedridden Maria Valtorta had written from visions and dictations from Jesus on the gospel and faith formation in the 1940's, I became convinced that these writings were divinely inspired (no human could possibly have put this together, let alone Maria). These remain my profound inspiration and though there is a large and growing international readership (including Mother Teresa), the Church has not promoted them. I have read these continuously for thirty years on almost a daily basis, still get huge amount of new insights into the gospel and my faith, and hope to continue for the rest of my life. These words of Jesus will reinspire the Church in this modern era I believe, but, like 2000 years ago, we will need to reawaken and recognise our current Pharisical situation. History in the Church and in the Old Testament tells us that this will take some time.

I have not always been faithful—like most young ones, I did have my rebellious time during the late 70s and early 80s. I was brought up in a strong faith filled family and in my late teens just had enough of practising my faith and did think I could go it alone. It was after I got married that I questioned my life and where it was heading. When we discussed children, I decided that I was searching and questioning because my heart was empty. One Sunday, I decided I was going to Mass and from then on went faithfully every Sunday morning. I was still feeling empty for no reason. One day, a lady from church asked me if I would consider helping her clean the church once a month. I hate cleaning but somehow just answered her 'yes'. I started doing this with her and her husband and after a while, her husband asked me why I'm not involved more in the Church. He introduced me to the priest whom had already welcomed me previously and then went on to say that I could start proclaiming the Word on Sundays. I told him that I have a lisp and that most probably people would not understand me—he said "I can understand you perfectly. You can read the first reading next Sunday". I said okay and went home and told my husband. I started practising the reading the next few days and although very nervous that Sunday morning—I went up, quietly said a prayer to Mother Mary and started reading. After Mass, a lot of people came up to me and said it was such a wonderful reading, very clear and just the right tone. I was so happy that when Father [ - ] asked me to continue reading and being on the roster, I said yes. After that, there were many other prompts from parishioners who asked me to help them. As I got more involved, my faith grew and the desire to learn more grew. One day I saw a pamphlet in church about Medjugore and there was a slip to send off for a free rosary, I sent it off and thought nothing of it. In between this, I had a dream of

God came to me and felt the warm glow all over me. I clearly remember this voice telling me "I'm proud of you, [ - ]" and the happiness and freedom I felt. During this time, I also remember about the rosary I had requested but not heard anything back and spoke to a friend about this—me not being happy about the response. In another occasion, I saw the vision of Mary in an oval shaped cloud and bending down with her right hand forward. I also felt a warm glow then and thought "oh, she is wanting to spank me". I did not think much of it. My family and I went away to Walpole for a small break and when I came back, there was a package in the mailbox with the rosary and a small container of Holy Water. I was so happy and felt guilty about being upset previously and I know believe that Mary was trying to convinced me to continue to have faith and hope and was reaching out for me, not trying to spank me. I am convinced God is there to love me and guide me and I love being part of a community of believers.

Overall the group share their experience of faith or 'being Church'. All had had some experience of times of doubt. Most of the group felt they were shaped first of all by their parent/s and several by the witness of others in their early twenties or their 'partner to be'.

Individual stories were shared and as a group what came through was that intolerance was a major concern in clergy-people relationships and led so often to members stepping aside from Church participation.

I felt like chains bound around my whole body but after attending daily Mass, retreats, healing Masses—especially conducted by the Vincentian priests—the chains have gone and I am a happy and contented person trying to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ.

I would like to thank the person or group of people who established ACYF. While I believe the festival still needs some fine tuning in terms of target ages and identifying levels of faith formation, I think the festival is an absolutely wonderful way to inspire and provide formation and courage to young people in Australia. I strongly believe and have been privileged to receive the fruits of being involved in the Catholic Youth Ministry of [ - ]. Their WYD trips, conferences (Embrace the Grace, Veritas), camps for teens and regular Adoration nights and support for parish youth groups have all been greatly beneficial in my faith formation and journey. I have experienced God's love, mercy and grown in knowledge through these events and am so grateful to the youth ministry leaders who've provided these spaces for God's love to be experienced. I ask that Council members listen to those in youth ministry positions to share ideas and stories so that best practices can continue and improvements are made where necessary. I wish I could speak more broadly on these above questions but my experience so far is that of a young person and my responses come from my personal experiences. Again, I wish to thank the leaders of the Catholic Church in Australia in taking up the task to hold this Council and follow through on its outcomes. Be assured of my prayers in this time.

My grandparents, my parents and my uncle and aunt ran a greengrocery business together. They were always helping people who were in financial need by giving them produce for free or at a reduced rate. They supported the local parish, schools and the missions through cake and dessert making, crocheting, volunteering, donating raffle prizes and being involved in fetes and visits to people who were lonely or in need of help. Their faith was a faith of service which had a profound effect on me and my experience of faith. It is an example of living the faith which I have adopted with great joy.

One person in the group shared the story of being a faithful member of the congregation for 40 years, yet as her husband declined in health and slipped into dementia, he did not receive one visit from a member of the congregation to which he had given so much of his time. (This occurred because it was not a parish as such and those who attended came from many locations, meaning that his absence was not noticed) this is often repeated in the stories and suggests that there needs to be a better way for the sick, bereaved and lonely to be able to register their need for pastoral care—and for it to be available). There are many other stories but these were not able to be captured.

<p>We have been meeting as a small Christian Life Group for over 40 years. These "meetings" have always helped us to reflect on the question of "What would Jesus have done in any situation we as individuals find ourselves in". This process of "Active Listening" has been very useful in considering the question "What is God asking of us in Australia at this time?" We would like to increase the number of small groups in the diocese and return to the practice of supporting these groups as was the case in the 1970s when Vatican II teaching were considered as a basis for Church teaching.</p>
<p>A few years ago, after receiving Communion, I had an experience as though Christ said to me "I am you." While this is still beyond the grasp of my understanding, I have a deeper realization of "I live, no not I, Christ lives in me." "Whatever you do to these the least of my brothers and sisters you do to me." And Jesus' words "The Father and I make our home in you." In the words "This is my body ... this is my blood ... " I often have the sense that they are being spoken in me by the Christ in me, including, " ... broken ... poured out ..." This becomes a deep honour and challenge which, as I said, my mind does not grasp but my heart knows the truth of and I sense myself drawn along. I've learnt that union with God is not something to be striven for or worked towards. The reality is that I (we) are in union with God and our life movement is to realize, to believe in, to know that deep union and to trust its reality. Thanks be to God for this revelation.</p>
<p>I have always believed that devotion to the holy rosary is second only to the Mass itself. The graces that one receives as I have myself by trying to say this prayer as often as possible cannot be overestimated. Sadly, this devotion seems to be out of vogue in our Church today. I have always told my students that devotion to this prayer will stand to them in this life and the next.</p>
<p>My mum is a practising Catholic but my father cheated on my mum. She stayed with him because she didn't want a divorce. My father wanted the divorce. Now my mum won't look for another man or spend time with a man as she is concerned it does not follow the Churches' belief. This is very sad.</p>
<p>Across the group, a theme was shared about maintaining relevance to our families through the dialogue we are having. So often, our dialogue is dominated by sex and sexuality (Gay marriage, celibacy, abuse) to the exclusion of other messages about sharing our faith.</p>
<p>I have heard many stories where people have left the Church because they have had a child out of wedlock, they're homosexual or they got divorced. Yet they are the nicest people who love others.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• [ - ]—Brought up in [ - ]: I've never really had any problem being authentically Catholic. I've always cherished my faith. My grandmother was not a Catholic, but a good Christian. I learnt a love of the Bible from my non-Catholic friends—pre Vatican II. I've been aware of the divisions within the Church, including amongst Catholics who are not tolerant of other Christians and/or faiths and aware there was lots to be overcome. I was always interested in Christian unity and involved in praying for Christian unity, plus, with my wife, the Women's World Day of Prayer. I'm saddened that this is not mentioned or promoted in my parish (and others) and feel it needs to be promoted at a local and diocesan level. We need to be respectful to overcome the prejudices towards other faiths and find a way to recognise that most Muslims are peaceful people too.</li><li>• [ - ]: I became a Catholic here in [ - ] when I was 8. My mum died when I was a baby. My dad later married a Catholic who believed that children should be brought up in the faith of the mother. Having embraced the opportunity and been happy to be Catholic, and been happily married to a Catholic for many years, I'm not sure I'm authentically Catholic. I don't make a habit of praying every day, as others do. I've always been impressed at the reverence witnessed in some Catholics, but more so in people of other faiths. Muslims pray multiple times a day and I see them flocking to the Mosque, especially during Ramadan. I also have family members who are 7th Day Adventists and have been impressed by the services I've attended with them, and their welcome and hospitality.</li><li>• [ - ] During the 21 years I spent working in Youth Ministry in the UK, through the 1980's and into the New Millennium, I was actively involved in Church Youth Officers groups in the two different Counties our diocese spanned. Both groups had the same philosophy, we would do as much work together as we could, other than that which was specific to our denomination, and needed to be separate. We as Youth Ministers, the young people and our Church communities benefitted hugely</li></ul>

<p>from our joint ventures. On moving to Australia, I was surprised to find the Catholic Church not so engaged with other denominations.</p>
<p>I am the eldest son of migrant Maltese parents who arrived in [ - ] as newly-wedded 19-year-olds. Catholic in their upbringing, my parents worked several jobs at a time to put their 4 children through Catholic schools. Like the majority of my friends, my 12 years in school did little to bring about a personal relationship with God, meaning that when leaving school, I was no longer engaged with faith. It wasn't till attending a Summer school of Evangelisation run by the Disciples of Jesus Covenant Community that I encountered a personal relationship with Jesus. Ever since, 25 years on, that relationship has been fostered through sharing life with a Community of men and women committed to sharing life together, both corporal and spiritual. This encouragement has sustained me through the ups and downs of life. Together with the benefits of a sacramental life provided by my parish, faith has been sustained and developed. I have been able to serve the Church in ways that I could never have imagined and am truly grateful for those who have been so integral to my journey of faith.</p>
<p>My experience is that being part of a community and prayer group has helped me shape my faith. Learning from others and their life experiences and encouragement has helped me grow in my faith and for the Love of my God. I have learnt so much of my faith through community participation in Bible study courses, prayer groups, novena and other ministries. So, in my experience I believe all parishioners should be part of a group or cell group like the protestants have. It gives a sense of belonging and fellowship. So perhaps the Catholic Church in Australia should consider have more family groups/couple groups, etc.</p>
<p>What I would like to know is for example I used (<i>sic</i>) from India.          1) Why were these Institutions set up (to provide education for the benefit of the under privileged) or to make money?          2) Why were hospitals set up (to provide treatment for the down trodden and under privileged) or to make money? I would like the Church to pay tax just as Jesus said. Why does the Catholic Church take what it likes from the Preaching of Jesus or that which is suitable and favourable and not do what Jesus has asked of us to do? (Pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and pay to God what belongs to God).</p>
<p>My parents, grandparents, relatives fostered our faith. They were totally connected to the Church community, as well as the wider community. Our family fostered our faith and values of right and wrong.</p>
<p>Our group comprised of two non-Catholics and 3 Catholic people. Somehow through praying to the Holy Spirit and following the recommended procedure, we came up with very similar answers.</p>
<p>I was drawn to the Church via my husband, his leadership within our family to attend Mass each week. My husband was drawn to Church by the strength and leadership shown by our priest. I was inspired to go through RCIA by our priest and was baptised last year. As a new Catholic, I am drawn to understanding the rich history and the depth of the teachings.</p>
<p>I wasn't raised as a child with a faith. As a child, I used to sneak into the local church on a Sunday into the back rooms and listen to the kind lady telling the children Bible stories with a felt board and felt characters. I found God through her stories and I never felt alone and as frightened again.</p>
<p>One of the biggest experiences I have lived as a married person to a man who decided to follow the Christian faith when we first married and then went pear shape for him has completely destroyed my life. He has turned our children against the Catholic Church and has taught our children to question everything. Both children stopped going to church and decided to use drugs. I am still suffering from this and have not been able to work. I now go to church all by myself and my children are left to question as to whether they should attend or not. They secretly believe in God but they try to please their father by going along with his beliefs. My husband who is a musician wants to come to church to play for the choir, as I sing, but I don't even want him there after what he has done to our kids. What I am saying here is that young Catholic girls who are thinking of getting married should only marry someone who feels the same way about their Christian faith. As much as I</p>

<p>love my husband, I have suffered miserably for many years. I hope when the children mature into full adulthood, they will follow my footsteps.</p>
<p>I was one of the vast disengaged and many in my family still are, I have always had faith and believed I was a Catholic but never really took any notice of anything else. I came back to give an example to my own children to ensure they had faith, hope and love for Jesus and an ability to understand and talk to him. I have been influenced by many priests and brothers but it has been through adoration that I have found peace, hope, love and understanding. One hour with the Lord a week where I can talk to him, pray, whinge or just sit and reflect have given me strength. I believe that this one thing is crucial to reinvigorating all these people who still tick Catholic but are looking for a sign to return. Give them this and Jesus will do the rest. I trust in him and know that this is the way forward for all of us.</p>
<p>My story is now a long one and I believe I have been shaped and assisted along the way by my parents and especially by the early parishes I lived in. By the ongoing dedication of the parish priests, the members of the community who were prepared to offer their talents and time to the parish environment. (Very few cars, no internet, email, etc. and yet communication happened through personal sharing). I also learnt the power of the pulpit when we did not have one—Eucharist was in adjoining parishes. Those appointed to 'lead' had to find other ways and maybe this was the most relational parish I have been in.</p>
<p>I volunteer my spare time to be a youth leader at the parish. My group aims to bring together young adults in fellowship through social activities, scripture learning, praise and worship and social justice activities. Our group has brought a togetherness amongst like-minded people. I was at the Veritas festival in [ - ] and I came across an old friend who wasn't Catholic. She was interested in the faith and I invited her to tag along with me. I then introduced her to members of my group as well as the seminarians. By God's grace, she continued hanging around our group and is now attending RCIA sessions. I'm her sponsor and I pray she makes it all the way to becoming a Catholic. Through a welcoming and vibrant community, Christ has another follower. This experience has been a blessing from God. Thank you for your time and for considering my perspective. I know my views on homosexuality are quite liberal (I'm not homosexual), but I feel with a more open arms approach, we can be the fertile ground in which many seeds sow. Thank you and God bless you all.</p>
<p>My faith in the family, we prayed together before coming to Australia, Sunday Mass weekly. The crucial point for me was my temporary vows as a Christian Brother. The novitiate experience, of prayer, reflection and mission life. How can the Catholic Church provide similar experiences for young or older Catholics? We are entering an epoch of older men and women. How can we utilise that energy?</p>
<p>Up until the last year, I have been attending Mass at least once a week and I have been involved with my parish. My sons were altar-serving even. It is difficult to get them to Mass now that they are so aware of the sexual atrocities by a minority within the Church. Everything reported on the news and in the papers is absorbed. I wonder if teachers are equipped to discuss all of this to the students. All of my children attend a Catholic school and find the content boring, often not applicable and the teachers are usually disengaged and make no effort. The 'Come Follow Me' is often used badly—with staff saying "read pages 1 to whatever and do worksheet number ..." I feel it is abused. This is sad and not helping parents at home! There is no reason that students should have to do a full course of religion in year 11 and 12— it is disadvantaging our children as they have more work to do than students at state school. A moderate amount of religion that is applicable and somewhat hands-on will help teenagers more. I disagree with anyone that says studying religion in years 11 and 12 is turning teenagers towards the Church. It is in fact turning them off! I don't believe staff are treating religion the same as other learning areas. Often marks are not released (i.e. marked!) for whole terms. Many staff do not want to teach religion and after teaching religion for 10 years, I know it is hard work but it can be rewarding. Hopefully [ - ] will be heading away from the tertiary institutions dictating what schools do and head towards an industry approach. We can then do away with WACE exams and concentrate on the whole person.</p>

<p>I'm aware of George Pell's recent conviction, as most Australians are not. When that publicity disaster comes out, the only way through is utter humility. And pay the compensation asked!</p>
<p>I am a member of the Couples for Christ whose charism is to evangelise people back to our Holy Catholic Church and to God. Becoming a member of this community has enabled me to learn more about our Catholic faith by discovering our spiritual life through loving God, loving others, and teachings. Today, I am standing in front of God with a transformed passion to pursue my race of Faith and discovering my real purpose in life.</p>
<p>Here is my experience of the Church in Australia (specifically in the Catholic Education System)). Not once did I feel inspired by the curriculum to live the Faith. Nearly all of the teachers taught RE so they could teach in a 'prestigious Catholic high school'—there was little to no effort to evangelise. We were not challenged to strive for sainthood. Critical topics such as the Church's awesome and life-supporting stance on Abortion, Euthanasia and same-sex marriage were largely swept aside. The CES treated us like babies and taught only the most basic teachings of the faith without going deeper. Teachers, largely, were too timid to answer direct, hard questions. Parish chaplains were nowhere to be seen. All of my friends entered Catholic schools as kids, raised Catholic. They left Catholic schools completely anti-Catholic, uninspired and not properly pastored. The CES does not raise Catholics. It turns people away. Whoever writes the curriculum, I'm sure, mean well. However, they are completely out of touch with young people and how we learn. Clearly, they subscribe to a bland, uninspiring personal interpretation of what the Church teaches. As a youth minister, I can 100% affirm that Youth Ministry is far more effective at evangelising than Catholic schools.</p>
<p>We have had the blessing of being a part of a charismatic community in [ - ]. This has strengthened our faith through being around a group of amazing people who are strong in their faith and commitment to God. This has also given us a place where we are able to serve God through various ministries.</p>
<p>My faith deepened and was strengthened when I was involved in a parish which had a parish priest whose English was understood, who preached meaningful and relevant homilies and where the music was modern and full of life. The church was full at every Mass and had a wonderful feel to it.</p>
<p>I received the gift of faith at age 41 whilst at a healing service where the Blessed Sacrament was exposed. I found that immediately after that I was strongly attracted to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. This encounter outstripped and radically deleted all I had learned at school about a punishing God.</p>
<p>A FEW YEARS WE ATTENDED A MASS IN CANBERRA THE PRIEST WE HAD INVITED DIVORCED PEOPLE UP TO RECEIVE THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST I WISH THAT MY DAUGHTERS WERE THERE TO HEAR THIS NEWS.</p>
<p>World Youth Day 2008 has been a paramount of my faith in Australia. It was an opportunity for me to attend Mass with the Pope with thousands of people. However, we did not respond as one. Not everyone could say "et cum spiritu tuo" because we simply never learn it. Imagine if everyone responds in one voice, it shows the oneness of the Church and the unity of the people. The youth are the future of the Church. Opus Dei in Australia has also shaped me by attending their recollections and silent retreats. I think we need an Opus Dei centre in every major city in Australia.</p>
<p>We feel that PP formation will be key to improving the leadership. We have seen the great results that can happen with a PP who is genuinely inclusive of the children at EVERY Mass, including them meaningfully in the Liturgy, not just the main 'family' Mass. With a change of priest and approach, this parish church is now full of young families. Many talented women have left the Church, either for no established church or for another denomination. Surely diminishing the talent opportunities for leadership only diminishes the potential of the Church? Very traditional Catholics are now leading a charge in my church to have all women off the altar and anyone who has not received first Holy Communion. This is hierarchical, elitist and not at all in the spirit of what I believe Jesus was imparting. My daughter was on the roster to proclaim but she met considerable criticism of her (very good as she was studying public speaking in school) efforts to read the Word—mainly due to her</p>

<p>being relatively young. She was about 13/14 at the time. This sort of behaviour will drive the younger generation further away.</p>
<p>I attend Mass quite often as I work in a Catholic school. I feel upset and excluded because, as a confirmed Anglican, I am unable to take communion. I understand I am from a different religion, but we are all Christians, we have the same God.</p>
<p>I was raised Catholic and happy to be part of a worldwide family of the original faith. I became born again during a Catholic charismatic Bible course and my life will never be the same, in a good way. This may not have happened if I simply attended church. Since then, I have enjoyed going to Mass, but from time to time, long for the hard hitting and uplifting atmosphere of the Pentecostal churches. But they lack the Eucharist and the history. If we could combine the two styles, oh how our churches would be overflowing.</p>
<p>[ - ] also shared a powerful experience of Celebrating Mass on Saturday at a parish in [ - ]. These are some of her experiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∅ At the beginning of Mass people were all bubbling. The assembly was asked to greet someone they did not know.</li> <li>∅ At the Eucharistic Prayer time, children were invited to sit around the altar.</li> <li>∅ The youth were involved with the choir.</li> <li>∅ When the Our Father was said, everyone held hands. [ - ] mentioned she could not feel her feet when Mass was done, it felt like she was lifted from the ground.</li> </ul>
<p>All members of our group were lucky enough to have been raised in households where faith and going to church were the norm. Parents and extended family provided great example of how to love and give service to others. All had been influenced in positive ways by the sisters and religious orders that lived close by and were seen not only in church but out in the community. They provided great support to families who may have been struggling. Faith was there in action. At certain times in our lives we become aware that God is truly present in our lives. Faith provides us with reassurance that we are never alone, we have a companion on the road as we negotiate the many twists and turns as we journey through life. Prayer is the language we use to communicate with God. All of us in our group have witnessed the little miracles that have come about when we pray. We are all grateful that we know the importance of God in our lives and the commitment to learn more about our God continues to grow the older we get. Thank you for this opportunity.</p>
<p>I have been involved in and moved by the humble beginnings of [ - ] Catholic church in [ - ] and how we have rallied together to build the church up. It is still a work-in-progress project and keeps us together as a community.</p>
<p>The Church in Australia has always been a strong source of support for me throughout my life. I didn't always attend church through high school up until I was in my late 20s. Yet there was always a sense that God was present and overseeing the way my life was headed. Speaking with a number of good priests over the years, particularly in [ - ] led me to consider what was important in life and not to become complacent. I began to appreciate the value of suffering and that is it through trials that we emerge the stronger.</p>
<p>The most profound faith experience I have had was to seek an annulment of my marriage. This may seem very odd to say but by submitting to this process it allowed me the opportunity to obtain a much deeper understanding of myself. My weaknesses and sinfulness. As a consequence, I came to realize how poor my early spiritual and personal life formation was.</p>
<p>I grew up in a non-religious household, but was sent to a Catholic school for a good education. The grace of God alone kept me faithful and committed to my beloved Church. I clung to Our Lady—dedicated my marriage to her, and learnt my faith online and through EWTN, and thanks be to God, my teens and young adult children are still practising Catholics (they did not attend the local unfaithful Catholic school)—listen to these young people, I beg you!</p>
<p>Priests who are "real" and understand that life is not black and white but is tricky at times, have inspired me and strengthened my faith. There have been two, in particular, over the years that have been wonderful.</p>

Everything is rote learnt and boring. This therefore offers little meaning and applicable information. I've attended for the past 25 years and learnt little without doing my own research/Bible studies. Attendance is dramatically decreasing as it is boring and repetitive.

I did not include an answer in my last response. I am disgusted by the dialogue which was carried out in my worshipping community. It has subsequently come to light that the priest enclosed a woman from outside our community to take the lead. She did this very well but at the end, despite requests, she never shared with us what the submission was. Only the priest saw it. Also, despite her ability to lead she was and is not part of our community. This to me is a blatant example of priestly manipulation. How can the Plenary Council achieve any change if priests act in this way???

I came into the Catholic Church 20 years ago at age 45. I felt as if I'd come home. There are so many good people in my church. I thought that all priests must believe the same. I soon found out that I was wrong. You had to be careful who you talked to as not all priests were Marian and some seemed to gravitate more to the wealthier parishioners. To the point of virtually ignoring other parishioners. A priest who recently left our Church to go to another publicly ridiculed me last winter in front of my friends when he sarcastically ridiculed my suede boots and stated that even the 'sheep' wouldn't wear them. They were clean and stylish, he just didn't like them. I was so hurt and would never have expected a priest to have spoken to anyone like that. This abuse by priests has to stop. One lady was told that she was fat. She left the Church. Be that as it may; When I first came into the Church, I had been searching for which church I should go to. My husband who was a lapsed Catholic at the time, suggested the Catholic Church. So, we went. The first time I entered the church I was immediately drawn to the picture of the Divine Mercy in the foyer of the church. I asked a parishioner what is that picture. Then in the church, throughout the Mass I saw a golden halo of light surrounding the statue of Our Lady, and also around the crucifix. Afterwards I spoke to the priest about it. He told me that God knew I had been searching and that it was GOD'S way of showing me his true Church. I became a regular at the weekly rosary Cenacle and also a catechist, [ - ] of the [ - ] district of the legion of Mary, and a Sunday morning 9am Mass choir member.

Many of my friends (former Catholics) have formed our own spiritual group creating liturgy on a fortnightly basis in a place and way that suits us. It allows for creativity, meaningful sharing, Eucharist (thanksgiving) that is valued in itself not as 'duty' or from fear. The group serves others in need and is cosmic conscious. For me, it sits alongside official Church liturgy and is often more life-giving than Sunday or weekday Mass!

- Teaching values of life.
- Core principles.
- Stories-good morals.
- Value of pastoral care in Catholic schools.
- Church needs a community feeling, a feeling of belonging, where relationships are built.
- Church needs upbeat music and afternoon tea.
- Social justice/acts of service shape people and encourage them to do God's work.
- Convert.
- I could never offer the sign of peace without smiling, no matter what mood I was in and I challenge others to try.
- Primary teachers of R.E. were engaging, genuine, faith-filled.
- Like-minded people.
- Sharing and living the gospel.
- The foundation of the Catholic Church has embedded me with strong connection to my faith and development as a person.
- Change in the sense of the Catholic community and how do we gain that belonging of kinship back?
- Influence of the parish priest plays a big role and keeping the Catholic community in the Church.

I have been a staunch Catholic all my 70 years and I will continue to be so but I am thoroughly disillusioned by the Church's behaviour in respect of paedophile priests and religious. The scandalous way in which abhorrent crimes have been covered up by shifting perpetrators to other

<p>parishes is despicable. The most important thing we were taught as young Catholics was Christ's love of the innocent children. If the Church does not completely remove this stain from its midst it will become totally irrelevant to the general community. I also believe that the Church should stop vacillating and hiding behind legalities and fully compensate all victims of criminal assault by Church members. Thank you.</p>
<p>Mum christened me after [a German emperor] fearing that she and I would be killed since falling pregnant she was sabotaging Hitler's War. Luckily, she was forced to work for a Catholic German family farm in Bavaria. And thank God for Stalingrad when I was born. The Germans now realised they were not invincible and could lose the war; therefore, be careful how they treated POWs and forced labourers. We were Displaced People for five years until we arrived in [ - ] in 1950 and given air conditioned accommodation in country [ - ]. All one had to do was open the tent flaps and one was conditioned by hot and cold air. But as a kid I just loved it. It was a great adventure. By the way, Catholic Poland saved European Christianity TWICE. The first time 9/11 1683 in Vienna when the Polish King Sobieski answered the Pope's call for help. He routed some 300 000 Muslim professional army with his 30,000 strong Calvary. The Muslims were on their way to convert St Peters into a Massive Mosque (the Golden Apple) they had previously captured Constantinople a few centuries prior. Less well known was when in 1920 the Soviets attacked Poland as stage one of conquering Europe and making it part of their communist atheistic empire. They greatly outnumbered the Polish forces who decisively defeated the Red Army horde in Warsaw (without outside help). Stalin never forgave the Poles for this humiliating defeat. Both successful wars were seen as intercession by God. And Mary is the Patron Saint. Of Poland, Julius Caesar said "I came, I saw and I conquered." (Britain). John Sobieski said "I came, I saw and God conquered."</p>
<p>Please see above, I would love for my family to want to go back to church. Not sure if this where to raise but lengthy sermons that are hard to follow are also turning people away. Priests should be encouraged to keep the sermons relevant and no more than 5–7 minutes to keep parishioners' attention.</p>
<p>My experiences by and large were good. I encountered good priests who helped form me and my faith. Be it in my early years or in my youth and as a Novice/Seminarian for four years. I am now married and continue to pass on to my children all that I have been taught.</p>
<p>From my experience in Australia, I feel that most people who go to daily Mass do so because they want to, unlike when we were in Asia we somehow did so more as a sort of habit ... In Asian countries, most people do not use the Daily Missal whereas it is very common to do so in Australia. This in turn has enriched our appreciation of the Mass in Australia and the whole Mass has been so much more meaningful in Australia.</p>
<p>My husband and I are a married gay couple with a one-year old son, we are very blessed to belong to a parish in which we are actively welcomed and included by the parish priest and wider community. We are enriched by attending Mass each week and experience a true sense of community. We are grateful that our son has been baptised into such a community and can grow and learn in this loving, accepting environment. However, this is not a common experience, and in many parishes and communities we would not be so welcomed, like many others in our world. God is asking us to make our own experience in the Catholic Church and parish life universal throughout Australia, so that it reflects the values and mission that Jesus proclaimed—a Church where all are welcome.</p>
<p>My early experience of a priest engaging and visiting the playground on a regular basis throughout my primary school years.</p>
<p>Collectively the group members acknowledged feeling very privileged to be part of the Church, and involved in the Ministry of RCIA. Our biggest concern is the lack of involvement and ownership of the general Church community, and lack of real support at time experienced from priests; especially in regard to the inclusion of the Rites at Sunday Masses. Our parish communities need to be more active in welcoming the stranger in their midst, especially supporting those choosing to journey to faith through the parish RCIA. The ongoing involvement of these people in the life of the Church is greatly influenced by the engagement they have with the parish on the journey. If some seem to</p>

fade away soon after being received into the Church, we need to seriously ask why? And look at how well we as a parish got to know the people and encouraged their growth in faith and involvement with the community.

As a mother of young adults, I would like to share my experience of being involved in family and parenting groups. The goal of these groups was to pass on family enrichment formation among parents who wanted to enhance their opportunities of learning to become great parents. As parents from these groups, we aimed to get our families to spend quality time with each other, which also included picnicking, camping, hiking and family get-togethers in each other's homes. Within these settings, we have all formed many great friendships, had a great deal of fun, as well as having the privilege of sharing knowledge and the parenting experiences of other people who like myself and my husband wanted to do the very best job we could to bring up our children. We always wanted these groups to be inclusive of as many parents who showed an interest. I sincerely hope there will be many parents who could be a part of other such groups, because as parents we need as much support from the Church as well as from friendships.

First time in my life after many years practicing as a faithful Catholic (I'm now 60 yrs of age) I feel sadness, loss, anger and trepidation for the future of the Catholic Church. It's who I am and not able to be heard or listened to by the people (though I could imagine. I have worked with love for the Church all my life by joining YCW in my youth, to becoming a reader, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, RCIA catechist, frequent member on the parish pastoral councils over the years. My last appointment was a safeguarding officer for the safeguarding program in the [Diocese]. This was a very difficult assignment because of the initial workload on my own (due to problems with my associate) to the control games played out in the parish by the parish priest. I had to leave the parish after 15 yrs and attend Mass about 20 minutes away with my family. I was also treated poorly by a school Chaplain (priest) when trying to discuss the growing lesbian problem in my daughter's all girl Catholic high school. On a more positive note, these difficulties when trying to find the truth in the Church has helped my faith to grow stronger and my relationship with the Lord and Our Blessed Mother has grown and deepened more than I could ever imagine. I can say now I don't regret what happened to me as it gave me great insight to the problems happening in the Church today. I can give acknowledgement to those devoted Catholics on social media who are trying to get the truth out to the world with the real news on the state of our Church in these difficult times. I would like to thank the council for the opportunity to express my concerns, voice my opinions on what I feel the Holy spirit might be leading me to say and the chance to ask questions.

My experience of faith; I was born a Catholic and had a Catholic upbringing. I am a mother of 7 children who was a fulltime stay at home Mum for 27 years. My faith is the most important treasure in my life but it was not always so. While always attending weekly Mass, I grew to love God more over the years while trying to be a good mother and wife and example to my children and family. My faith grew over time to the point where I now pray 2 rosaries a day and attend daily Mass as often as I can in between shift work and especially on Feast Days. I pray morning prayer on Sunday mornings and sometimes evening prayer. I pray the Divine Mercy rosary at 3pm every day and a rosary for the Holy souls in purgatory. I pray the 7 sorrows of Mary mostly every night and go to monthly confession or every 4-6 weeks. I visit Jesus in the blessed Sacrament when I can't go to daily Mass whenever I can. Mary has interceded for me at different times in my life but never so when I was fasting one particular Friday 22nd February 2013 and the pilgrim statue was in our home. We were praying the 3rd decade of the sorrowful mysteries and I was in a state of distress over my son who at that time was diagnosed with a mental illness with schizophrenic and psychotic symptoms. I could not help him anymore and implored Mother Mary for help. I was pacing the floor while praying with some of my children and sick son. I can't remember what happened next but my children told me I fell slowly to the floor and my body bent completely backwards while I was on my knees. They carried me onto the couch and I woke up soon after. My sick son became very frightened but it seemed to bring him out of his psychotic symptoms and he was able to communicate with us instead of experiencing delusions and preoccupations. Ever since that day, he has not had another psychotic

episode. He is still a little unwell at times but never as he was before. He was first diagnosed on 13 September 2010 and was very sick till that day in February 2013. The work I now do in aged care and my job was also through the hand of God. I did nothing and everything fell into place. After being at home for 27 years full time, my husband was made redundant in his job of 30 years. We prayed so hard for him to find another job and prayed novenas but it wasn't in God's plan. The week he finished work I began my aged care course. Three days before I was to begin my 3-week work placement (Monday), on the Friday evening one of our sons attempted an overdose and was admitted into hospital that Friday evening. I didn't want to do my work placement but my husband was now at home full time and I knew if I didn't do it then, it would be very hard for me to finish later. After praying and reflecting and talking to our priest, I continued with what I knew I had to do. At the end of my 3-week placement, I was offered a part-time job. My son is better now though still sorting out his life. I know that my job was God's plan for me.

All my life, I have not been comfortable with the ritual and ceremonies required in Church practice. I welcomed the changes to English, not eating meat on Fridays, fasting times before communion, etc. All man-made Catholic laws which have nothing to do with how Jesus wants us to live. In fact, some Church rules are in direct contradiction to what Jesus taught if our leaders take the time to read the gospels! I am out of patience with how slowly the Church is moving in this time of crisis. Outdated teachings and especially Catholic tradition are no longer relevant. We must change those practices which we keep on doing—but can see are not working anymore—birth control, women's role in the Church, priests wanting to marry, etc. With so much information available about all subjects these days, the world's population have simply bypassed the Church as irrelevant and Jesus' truth must be presented joyfully or soon there won't be a Church community where people can belong and draw strength from.

Everyone in our group shared their experiences of faith in the Church. Everyone said that they came to know Christ through the experience of having a Christian community. It was here the people came to know God and forgiveness and love. Without this community, this would not have been possible. For myself personally, I am a mother of 9 children who has seen the loss of faith with the people around her, especially at the Catholic school my children attend. People don't know what faith is because they have not experienced it anywhere and through anyone. Faith needs to be passed on in a physical and spiritual way but not even the priests are able to do this. I have been able to live this witness of the Gospel because I belong to a community which helps me do this. Here I am taught to love, forgive, serve and evangelise. This is something all Christians are called to do but don't. I have 9 children through the grace of God but even priests tell me that I don't have to take "being open to life" literally. But without faith, this would be impossible and I can see why families today don't have many children because they are not catechised well in this area. I hope the council can find some way of bringing real, tangible faith back to the people. Not just a series of talks or manuals, but real living faith that people can see and experience.

I am a mother of 9 children. Two have finished school. I have 6 still attending Catholic schools and one at home. For my husband and me, it is very important that our children go to Catholic schools to receive added faith through the school. I feel the school fees are too high and it is becoming a business. I think the Church should follow the example of Blessed Mary MacKillop who believed it was every child's right to an education but especially with Christianity as the main focus. I don't want to send my children to a government school because it's cheaper. I want them to be surrounded by the teachings of Jesus. This is becoming nearly impossible and we are faced with the very real threat of having to take our children out of the Catholic system because we can't afford it. I feel this is contrary to what Christ would want. Catholic schools should be a place of faith experience, discipline and love, not a place to make money from people.

I am cradle Catholic, who grew up in country Australia and we only had Mass every 3 weeks as a child till ten years of age, but had great Love of Eucharist. I have always had Special Devotion to Mother Mary and Family Rosary was always said especially if we couldn't have Holy Mass on Sunday I did keep the practice of my Faith growing up and around 30yrs of age, I realised at that time I

<p>needed to be more involved and active in church and not just go to Mass on Sundays. I needed Christian friends and Parish Community to share my Faith. I'm married with 5 grown up children. My husband converted to Catholic Church 10 years after we were married. We were married in Catholic Church 1971. I'm very grateful to all people involved in my journey of Faith and it is still ongoing. Also, all the priests that have been there for me and my family over the years and their faithfulness.</p>
<p>I had a friend whose daughter was denied baptism because the baby's father (my friend's husband) and his first wife had divorced before he married my friend. The divorce occurred after the first wife left her husband and a young family of 3 daughters. It seems so unjust and un-Christ-like to deny an innocent child of a sacrament because events in her father's life were not aligned with Church teachings.</p>
<p>One person said—"I am greatly influenced by the St John of God Sisters who had no hesitation in involving the laity in Governance when they felt the time was right. I believe this is what the Church needs."</p>
<p>I have witnessed priest demonstrating behaviour which would not be acceptable in any working environment, particularly toward women parishioners.</p>
<p>A recent notice in my parish bulletin has had a significant impact on me. It was a small prayer for our 'friends and family members' in the LGBT community. As a member of that community, I was grateful for the support, but felt incredibly isolated at the (certainly unintentional) implication that no member of the parish reading that notice would be LGBT themselves. This realisation helped me to understand why I felt isolated from the rest of the Church community, despite desperately wanting to be a part of it and share my faith journey with others. The fear of being judged or even of being considered 'other' because of my identity makes it very difficult to engage with other Catholics. Upon noticing this I also became aware of the immense number of LGBT individuals who are uncomfortable or afraid of pursuing their faith because of the assumption that they will be unwelcome or judged. Following the legalisation of same-sex marriage, and a growing understanding of LGBT Australia, I feel that the Plenary Council is being held at a crucial time for Australian Catholics to reflect on how best to share God's love and His Word with open minds and hearts.</p>
<p>The key experiences that have shaped my faith and practice are confined mainly to early family and the power of personal prayer and more formal prayers such as the Memorare.</p>
<p>For the past 8 years, I have served as a school Chaplain with a non-Catholic denomination. I have grown in my faith more than I have in my Catholic faith. They have offered me the resources to grow.</p>
<p>All of us were educated by the sisters and had strong families who passed on the faith to us. It may have appeared strict but it gave us structure. It was much easier for us growing up as there were definitely not as many distractions that would lead us to have other interests. Our children, many of whom do not go to church, are good people. They are raising their children to be loving, kind and considerate of others. All those things that Jesus told us to. So, the seed is there but they see no need of Church. Perhaps the Church of the future will be very different to what we experienced. We need to pray for each other in this journey.</p>
<p>I have been saddened by seeing so many Catholics shrug off practice of the Faith because of disillusionment with the way the Church is run by the clerics.</p>
<p>My participating in the formation of Catholic Engaged Encounter in 1980/81 and subsequent involvement for the ensuing 10 years in [ - ] has been a yardstick in my faith experience in [ - ]. Up to that stage, my faith was one of following the faith participation of my grandmother and mother in Singapore where I was born. I was quite taken aback when I first came to [ - ] at the poor numbers of Mass attendance. I continued to practice my faith, but it was not until my involvement with CEE that I realised that God wanted to use me as an active witness in our Church. This would be mainly through preparing young couples for the sacrament of Marriage and the witness of my married life in the Church. I thank God for supporting me and the Holy Spirit who continues to give me the wisdom and love to be an active witness of our great faith.</p>

I found that many times that people who are avoiding coming back into the fold are those who are truly thirsting for Authenticity—they have gone searching in other religious denominations and only return to the fold of the Catholic Church after experiencing "Holy Mass" celebrated in such a dignified and Holy reverence attire ... they felt a true presence of God and that the way the faithful present gave worship made it even more real that God was Truly present. This made them fall in Love again with our God. Their conversion began their hunger to know God better, serve Him and love Him grew each day.

From a Catholic who went to church every Sunday appeared to be a “good Catholic” but through the week was a heavy drinker and everything that goes with that. I could rationalise that there was no conflict between these two lives. Could not see how low I was sinking. When I listened to the first talks of the catechists of the Neo Catechumenal way it was the start of a beautiful experience which I am still experiencing today. I still enjoy a glass of red now and again but generally don’t drink. The other things that I did while drinking which were unseemly for a Catholic with the grace of God. I have been able to overcome but have to be on guard against always. I am beginning to see who I am that is a sinner in constant need of God’s mercy and forgiveness, but more importantly to see what a loving and merciful God I have as a Father who accepts me as I am and is always urging me to seek him for my happiness. I believe this: seek first the kingdom and the rest will be given as well.

My faith is essential for me. Without it, I would be lost. But I am saddened by the way the Church has behaved and the attitudes shown by the leaders of our Church in Australia. It seems to me that there is a great chasm separating the clergy from the laity. The clergy seem to live in ivory towers, perhaps lonely in their isolated celibacy, and the ordinary people have wandered away in disillusionment. In many cases, our leaders seem to have forgotten Christ's teachings. They seem to love the institution and traditions more than the people. They seem out of touch; even the prayers they ask us to recite are unnecessarily convoluted. I think that when the clergy marry and live among us, take their children to soccer on the weekend, try to make marriages work, we will see changes in the teachings that are so difficult for so many people to follow, such as around families and sexuality.

My earlier years were at a time when English speaking priests were PPs. This enabled me and the family to understand better the messages they offered about God's love and the Scriptures. In several parishes that I have attended in recent years, I cannot understand the message because of the limited English of the priests, and my regret is that the people are not getting the nourishment and encouragement that they could expect.

We as a group have had varied rich experiences and encounters within the Church in Australia. We have gone on pilgrimage to [ - ] and paid homage to the monks and Saints who have prayed for this land. We have enjoyed the Taize form of worship with the Sisters of St. Joseph and loved the Eucharistic presence of our Lord. We have encountered the very real healing presence of the Lord in Confession and Holy Mass in our parishes and a mighty revival in our faith through the renewal of our faith experience in the Vincentian Retreat Centres at [ - ] and [ - ] and radical faith practices at [ - ] parish, Divine Mercy College, [ - ] and [ - ] First Friday and First Saturday devotions—night vigils at [ - ] and the Summer school of Evangelisation Retreats conducted by the Disciples of Jesus Community. Thanks to our Archbishop [ - ], we are indeed very blest here in [ - ] to have so many amazing rich spiritual experiences!

The Neocatechumenal way has rescued me from religiosity and moralism and hypocrisy and self-loathing and despair. It has prepared me for some crosses which I am starting to welcome and to be thankful for. I can see that loving my crosses and praising God while in my furnace leads to freedom and joy. I don't hear this in the average parish Mass. The Neocatechumenal way teaches me not to be scandalized by my sufferings. I see that all things work to the good of those who believe—Romans 8:28—and that the cross is glorious and necessary, and that I am called to abandon all—especially my own ideas—to the Father. That Jesus Christ is my elder brother and my true friend—alleluia!!

- (Person 1) I didn't know what the Church was. I only discovered it through a Post baptismal Catechumenate and this PBC helped me to rediscover the beauty and richness of the Catholic Church.
- (Person 2) I was always in the Church, but looking back I see how little faith I had, how incapable I am of loving.
- (Person 3) I was going to church, but the Church didn't have an answer for me so I left. Having discovered later a Post baptismal Catechumenate I saw the Church had answers.
- (Person 4) Post baptismal Catechumenate is the beginning, leads to daily prayer, Post confirmation Program, to evangelise and to study the word of God and to put it into practice. There are people following me, my catechist, and my priest within a community which helps me grow in my faith.
- (Person 5) I come from a religious family however this didn't make me want to continue to go to church. Once I had experienced a marriage breakdown and seeing my children torn between the world and God. Also seeing this for myself. I have been enlightened by the Holy Spirit through the Post baptismal Catechumenate and my catechist, my community, and the priests not to lose hope but I have also seen the love of God for me and my children and in seeing the devil present in my marriage breakdown I now see that God exists, there is no doubt now. And for this, I am grateful to God, to my catechist and to the Church, The Neocatechumenal Way for helping me, guiding me to grow in my faith and in being a light to people around me.

The faithfulness and perseverance of majority Gods holy people and its clergy through all the trials of life. The hunger for the Spiritual life is constant.

- R.E in school wasn't considered important and I didn't take it seriously. Once a seminarian came and gave his experience and that was easy to relate to, I learned more from that. To have more of the Religious to come to schools would be good.
- Scripture was taught as a subject where I went to school in Malaysia. A subject on scripture in Australian schools may be a means by which non-Catholics can learn more about Christianity in Christian schools.
- Teachers should be trained to transmit the faith, not just to teach the principles. The need to have faith themselves in order to do this. Teachers should be asked more in-depth questions about their faith to ensure they are really Christian and live by Christian principles.
- Most of the parents/kids that are in my child's school do not attend church, but have a background where they used to attend church as kids. I believe they are hoping their kids will receive a Christian education, however they kind of education they are receiving in Catholic schools will not result in these kids growing up in the Church. So it would be good to look for at least weekly opportunities to direct the students to the church during school time, and treat this moment, not as an 'assembly' scenario, but a time to have a Mass and other sacraments. Catholic schools are an avenue to bring people back into the Church.
- Teachers could be encouraged strongly to enter a post-baptismal catechumenate, training in the faith, or Christian initiation to ensure a real experience of Christ that they can pass on to the children.
- Eradicate any indication of gender ideology in Catholic schools i.e. boys can be girls and vice versa.
- Doing lauds at school every day.
- Have a team of catechists do Catechesis in schools, where people that have an experience of Christ can tell them God loves them, to help those that are depressed, have anxiety, are in difficult situations.
- Stop worrying about being 'politically correct' in schools, and be a witness to the faith without fear, teaching Catholic values boldly.
- I had an experience where I left the Church while I was in high school. I think it would be good to provide many opportunities during school, especially high school where kids can receive the sacraments, especially penance, during school time to show that it is really prioritised.

I grew up in a family with a mother who encouraged us to engage in some aspects of faith formation—Mass, rosary, prayer life. I did find that in my teenage years I took a break from

<p>participating and it wasn't until my mid-twenties I returned to participation in Mass. I found that the Mass I was used to in my small home town community was vastly different when I moved to [ - ]. For a time, I experienced isolation even in a large church congregation. It wasn't until I realised that I was seeking a relationship with a God that understood my spirituality. It wasn't until I realised that for me going to Mass was about reflecting on the Sunday readings and Gospel and finding meaning for my everyday life. If I wanted a relationship with God, then I had to understand my own reason for being.</p>
<p>We live in small country communities, with a decreasing, aging, church-going population and many of us feel left out or disillusioned by the Church Hierarchy. Many of us can't easily travel to bigger centres so are often feeling as those we are in a Spiritual drought. Very few are technically savvy and online programs are left to the few to organise and disseminate. The uncertainty of our local Catholic church futures remains a constant concern. Hopefully we will be involved in the decisions that will affect us all. Some of us are considering retiring or moving to bigger centres where our access to the Mass and sacraments are there. We believe that Jesus is still with us and we need to support one another with some kind of spiritual guidance.</p>
<p>Attending Opus Dei recollections has revitalised my faith and meant I have put my faith and Love for God into action. My prayer life is stronger and I receive the sacraments more often. I understand that, as a son of God and living an ordinary life means I can offer up my work as prayer.</p>
<p>The Church has always been a huge part of my life and I got involved in youth groups as a teenager. As an adult, I joined a Catholic charismatic community and have stayed on this journey through marriage and family life. We can't be lone Christians and we need to build the Church Community up again.</p>
<p>The greatest thing that has sustained and grown my Faith, and enabled me to pass on the Faith to my children has been daily prayer, the sacraments and concerted effort to understand the faith in particular through basic apologetics and knowing the history of the Church and how it has benefited the world we take for granted today. A lot of the traditions that are cast aside today by "progressives" have also been significant: Adoration of the Blessed sacrament, devotions to Saints—in particular Our Lady, my guardian angel, St Michael and St Joseph. Daily prayer or daily visit to a church (even for a few minutes), regular confession, apologetics has been particularly powerful in being able to explain the faith to my children/teenagers/young adults (and others) in a reasonable and intellectually stimulating way. It should be noted that all of these things above the "world" does not offer—and comes from Christ, his Church and the sacraments.</p>
<p>I am in the Church despite some of the treatment that I have received because I focus on the teachings and the love of Jesus. There are many, many stories to tell and most you have all heard.</p>
<p>I am a Catholic now. I feel Christ has been drawing me to himself for over 60 years through absolute hell, torture and depravity to a better life. He has given me beauty for ashes and oil of joy anointing. He has shown how nothing can separate me from God with his love and mercy and the support of the community of faith. I was born in 1956 in [ - ]. I was baptised a Christian in the Congregational church. I went to Sunday school at the United, Uniting and Anglican church in [ - ]. I was not wanted as a child and I was born into a family with generational physical emotional and sexual abuse. My step grandfather tortured and abused me in a paedophile ring which included my father and some relatives. The group was known to police, extended family members and included abuse by a lawyer doctor who used class 8 drugs on us, and my sister and I were prostituted to various Church priests and students. This stopped when I was 6 years old as my grandfather died. My father sexually abused us until ages 10 and 12 for my sister due to the intervention of a gynaecologist. I have reported to the Royal Commission, and Towards Healing with no effect as yet. I have been in the Uniting church confirmed and active for 30 years, the Anglican church for 30 years and finally the Catholic Church via RCIA in 2018. I have had a lot of support from Catholic friends, Jesuit priests and influences but I was too terrified to join because of my experiences. God has healed me enough to trust in Him and the presence of genuine Christians to cope now as a regular parishioner. I believe my baptism and nuns at [ - ] saved my life. I have completed Uni with Honours degree in science,</p>

masters of Clinical Psychology @ [University] and Dip Ed and Masters of Policy and Management. I have worked for 40 years as a psychologist and clinical psychologist. I have an adult daughter who is doing honours at [ - ]. I was married for 30 years but divorced last year due to ongoing emotional financial and spiritual abuse. I have never been hospitalised for mental health but suffer severe PTSD, anxiety and depression. I have struggled a lot in my life but I am aware of God's presence and help when there was no one else. It is a profound miracle that I have survived despite severe back injuries to work, marry and have a child. I am very blessed but I live with ongoing pain and trauma and horror on a daily basis. I will do the Grief to Grace this July 2019 with Dr [ - ] and her team. I have paid a lot for help and healing but I have experienced great joy in seeing the healing I receive blessing many of the people I see. I enjoy the music choir prayer the Pray as you Go app, the Ignation prayer approach, the daily Rosary, the online missal and spiritual depth and wisdom of the Catholic Church. In some ways I feel the psychology is taking spiritual wisdom and packaging and marketing this as mentalization and meditation. I feel the rich prayer traditions.

This small group of committed Catholics have been meeting together for over 5 years trying to help develop small Christian Communities which enliven and empower lay people to take their rightful place in the Church. This has helped us to stay connected and involved in our Church which seems to be plagued with an unhealthy domination by clerical power which is often out of touch with the reality of people's lives and fails to acknowledge the significance of highly educated lay people who could contribute to the growth of the Church.

Shared personal experiences on these themes: Clerical abuse is related to priests putting themselves above other people, rather than being considered equal in humanity. They need to represent the God forgiveness and love rather than the God of harsh judgement which was the experience of growing up as a young Catholic girl, who was abused by parish priest, an experience which has had an impact on all her relationships in life since then. Our children have been brought up as Catholics but no longer attend church because they see it as irrelevant to their lives. Is church giving young people what they need to develop faith? Being married to an agnostic who lives the values of a Christian life better than the practising Catholic. The Church helps us to be good but others are good without the Church!

I attended the Catholic Primary [ - ] for 5 years, [ - ] for 6 years, during these years through my Father, I visited [a Catholic orphanage] later, I have been an Acolyte in [ - ], thanks to Bishop [ - ]. We married in the [ - ] parish 51 years ago. We have two children married in the Church. We have 6 grandchildren all baptized. My son rarely goes to church, his children attend a Catholic school so are receiving the sacrament's, but rarely attend church. My daughter never goes to church. Her children attend non-Catholic schools and have had no sacraments. Youngest granddaughter has at 13.5 years of age just changed to a Catholic Secondary school. My wife was educated at an Anglican Girls school, converted after our Marriage, has volunteered with Pregnancy Help, currently Catholic Women's League State co-ordinator for a section. We moved from our parish of 30 years to another area of [ - ]. Attend a church with a visiting priest, 90% of the average 60 attending are over 70 Years. There was nowhere in [ - ] that offered quality accommodation for over 75's in the area. We spoke to our priest and the suggestion to go to [ - ], an ex-orphanage, converted 40 years ago, not suitable. We moved to [ - ]. The old church and priest house is considered suitable for independent living development, the school wants child minding and care. So most of the elderly move from the parish if they wish to downsize.

I was bought up a Catholic and I when I was in my 20's I decided to stay one. Over the years, I feel my faith has shaped me to a point yet I have always had this feeling that something is missing in "My Church".

My relationship with God began a long time ago, even before I was aware of it. Briefly, I was brought up in India in a strict Catholic family. Being Catholic meant going to Mass on Sundays, regular confessions, etc. It was automatic—you didn't question you just did it. Years later after marriage and having a baby, my world just crumbled before me. I was 23 years old and had a baby just 6 months old and I was diagnosed with a Spinal Aneurysm and after a complicated surgery, I spent the

following year in a Rehabilitation Hospital learning to walk again. My mother looked after my baby and my husband tried to do his best to keep this family together, in spite of this adversity. I learned to walk again and left the hospital with no aids, not even a walking stick—that was a big achievement considering I was classified a "Paraplegic". That was the start of the mountains of adversities that I faced. In 1989, my health deteriorated—my legs were getting weaker and soon I faced life in a wheelchair. I had to give up driving, then working and then in 1993, it all came to a climax and I took an overdose. It was a turning point in my life as I for the first time began to feel the spirit within. In 1999, my husband died of stomach cancer—my daughter was now 25 years old and we both now faced a life without Dad. As hard as it has been all these 20 years, it made me reach out to God and He has been my Friend and my Mentor. I was now living in a Retirement Villa and though disabled, still made a happy life for myself. In 2017, I broke my arm and now I am in a nursing home. But the Lord had it all planned out. I struggled in hospital with coping with the thought of life in a nursing home and the massive job of selling my unit. Well you know where I am now and the Good Lord did it all. I am now in a Catholic Nursing Home and right outside my back door is [ - ] church!!!! I love it here though I am 30 years younger than everyone. This was the icing on the cake ... Nobody can tell me that there is no God ... for He is so alive and I can talk to Him anytime for He lives in my Heart. I have written this in more detail as part of my life story which I called My Miracle.

As a 15-year-old, I was in a choir and the character said that part you were just learning in Latin said ... Seek you first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added onto you. I began attending daily Mass and did so until after school days until I joined the army.

I have been baptised as a Protestant and a Catholic. Nowadays I worship at a Catholic church, love it and am dedicated to the Church's mission. I have been divorced, remarried, and disagree with the Church's teaching on contraception and several other things. Nevertheless, I feel loved, welcomed and included by my local parish community. My local parish priest is a loving intelligent man who is an inspiration. A practical, hardworking dedicated servant of God who leads many of us, who like him, look past our individual sins to simply see lost souls trying to do our best. I can see wonderful power within our Church and our people if we can just remove the controversies by being honestly transparent in everything we do and if we can be brave and overcome our timid conservatism.

Dear bishops: Above video clip is worth your time. Suffice to say, I too feel the desolation in our Church and our secular society ... (The world) 21 Feb 2019. Plenary Council. Submission to: "Listening" Australian Catholic Plenary Council AD2020 Can you please forgive me? Are you sure we should be listening to dissident priests like Fr [ - ]? Or to the Victorian Homosexual Catholic lobby as mentioned in last month's hand out? Surely some discernment is needed to protect this "Catholic" (emphasis on Catholic) Church from dialogue with the satanic. Pope Francis says: "We can't dialogue with Satan." Ironic that in Jesus's twelve, there was one dissenter. Yet! With us today, it seems only Bishop [ - ] is able to recognize Jesus as our Lord and saviour i.e. our Church's Master. (my perception—For there are many good and faithful priest.) Mother Mary said so at Fatima. She said. Quote: "Pray for good and holy priest. For they can make all the difference." End quote. We really are missing the point of "what is missing" with us, within the Catholic Church today. "Purity." (don't mean just with our poor priests either) Yep! We/She's a rotting ship; this rebellious, contraceptive pill popping, inhuman humanitarian, inclusive, universal, silent, Church. Regards, [ - ] [ - ]  
Ps We are a bunch of 153 dead fish ... at least one could say; "In this we have equality."  
Pps. Have you forgiven me yet?  
Ppps. Am at a loss as to why sometime around the late 50s and early 60s the pulpits went silent? Was it because of our Humanae Vitae's rejection and our subsequent rebellion? (apostasy)  
Pppps. I think Pope Leo's vision about the Church has come to fruition. [ - ].

As a group our main concern was—what can we do to encourage more parent involvement. We do invite parents to stay during class time for a cuppa and in the past, DVDs with religious content were viewed and discussed. However, it now seems to work far better as a social gathering where problems are sometimes shared and listened to. We would only ever have 3/4 people stay but we made sure the atmosphere was very welcoming. We are now considering sending home activities

that would require parent input. We could invite parents to stay for the classes with their children. We were also concerned that what we learned about our faith when we were younger is now being 'watered down'.

Franciscan Professions make a small change to the world.

I am a revert to the Church having found the nihilism of modernism could not bring me joy or peace. Key to my reversion were plain speaking priests who spoke the truth about Church teaching rather than water it down to make it compatible with the way I had been living my life. The commandments of the Church may seem restrictive on the surface but actually bring with them true freedom from passions and peace.

Group member 1. I was able to balance my life in the Church as a good Catholic and justify my actions in the world (which were not Christian). Although this did not worry me as wrong, I was unhappy and used alcohol and sexuality for comfort. The Neocatechumenal Way lead me and my community gently over much time, to see that we didn't have faith and couldn't love God or anyone But God loves us always. In my small community, I could remove my masks and be helped by our catechists, the Holy Scriptures, the liturgies especially the Eucharist and Penitential and celebrations of the Church and the brothers and sisters walking with me in our journey of faith. The priests and seminarians who walk with us are important because we are companions and brothers and sisters to them also encouraging and helping each other.

Group member 2. By walking in my Neocatechumenal Community for many years, I have been divested of my natural religiosity and learnt to have faith in God, trusting Him even when I am persecuted. Presently, in my family, I am hated by some members of my family for not agreeing with my child's confused and aggressive actions regarding his sexuality. Although this causes me great suffering, I have the Peace and joy of faith in Jesus Christ who has prepared me over the years, with my community, to follow and preach the Gospel and the truth taught by the Church.

Group Member 3. I was brought up and educated a Catholic and considered myself to have a strong faith. However, as I became a young adult, I was confused by the many devotions, and religious practices which stood as a barrier to Jesus Christ rather than a way to Him. I decided to leave the Church as both my brothers and most of my school mates did as the Church had no answer to a crisis I was having at the time. The catechesis of the Neocatechumenal Way was the only way I could remain in the Church because it preached the good news of Jesus Christ, His teaching and death and resurrection as a reality in my life. It also taught me how to see my life and history in the holy Scriptures. Most of all The Way followed the stages of my baptism, making them real and allowing me to accept them as I would were I to be baptised as an adult. I know I am a Christian because my initiation and baptism are a real part of my life with real faith, led by the Holy Spirit, in communion with the Church. Although I am the same person as 33 years ago when I started, I know God as my Father and have faith in His love which never fails and I know Jesus Christ Loves us all and is always true and is with us always as He said and I know the Holy Spirit is with the Church and its members and is always much more powerful than the world and its confusion.

When I was a young woman in a very abusive marriage and afterwards, several priests tried to take advantage of my vulnerability. One used my desire to be holy to groom me for a sexual relationship. After my husband left me and our six children, the priest and I became involved in a sexual relationship that lasted eight years. He left me for a younger woman. I admit my own sinfulness. However, if he had been a doctor or a psychologist, he would (and should have been) aware of his grave misbehaviour against a vulnerable 'client' (parishioner).

I was raised Catholic and went to Mass weekly till I was 17, however, I do not consider myself Catholic anymore due to several factors. Foremost, I have strong ideological and logical consistency problems with the Catholic faith. However, the wider issue for me that caused me to leave the Church was the institutional problems it suffers from and the hate, ignorance and stupidity I saw getting pumped out of the institution. I was crushed to learn about the decades of cover ups of sexual abuse (and lack of action), the historical perpetration of hatred towards minorities, and the continual hatred of minorities. I am a gay man and know I would have no real place in the Church, at

best an uncomfortable 'tolerance' by the wider community. And it's just extremely disappointing to see an institution that could be doing so well, considering many of the wonderful things it does do, fail so terribly, which also contributed to me losing my faith. I honestly don't even know how seriously the Church is taking this survey, and seriously doubt it will make any meaningful changes, so I don't feel comfortable sharing my stories about the Church, which in itself is disappointing, but I engaged in this survey just to voice some of my frustrations with the Church.

My children did not go to a Catholic school. One of them did go for 1 year but we were not happy with the instruction of faith. It was too wishy washy, being nice is not what Jesus is all about. Believing in Jesus means we have some faith formation of conscience where certain principles go against those of the secular world and those tenets clear from the commandments and the Bible were not taught clear and loud. A lot of her friends are not proud or have no interest or not go to church at all. We don't want our kids to grow up in that kind of Catholic school environment. We taught them ourselves, apart from using the Church sacramental services, and we go to church ourselves (even when we are travelling overseas for leisure and don't know the language). It is important that our kids know that we put Christ in the centre of our lives. He is important to us. They know that. And I hate to see them think that being a Christian just meant going to church on Sundays. That's not Church. That's a crutch, leaning on old ritualistic habits. Living in the faith means you listen to God's words from the scripture reading alive in your life circumstances. And you go there to receive sacraments, so dear to us, because Jesus passed them on for our souls' nourishment and growth, including the sacrament of reconciliation, which I urge my children to go from time to time. I have not quite made it to get them go monthly regularly, but will continue to remind them to. I explained how to do reconciliation. There are 3 simple rules:

1. You are truly repentant.
2. You tell all, succinctly the facts, where you did wrong.
3. You do your prayers and penance.

Too often, kids are afraid to go because they don't know the procedure. Yes, they do need to ask for God's blessing upon entering: there is this prayer I learnt: Pray that Father will bless me, allow me to reconcile and the last time I went to confession was ... Then there is the prayer which one says before the priest gives pardon. When I was young, I was taught to recite it, today, in Australia Church, it is usually printed in a card for the penitent to read. But that's it. I always say to my kids what joy and peace I obtain from this beautiful sacrament. And it need not always be about Sin, sins but the fact that your soul feels discomfort because you cannot forgive someone in your life, is worth going to the sacrament. It's God's gift. Parishioners need to be educated to protect priests' role in this.

I used to go to church weekly. Moving to a new place, I decided to go to a church nearby. Unfortunately, they spent most of the time decrying gay marriage, and I really questioned how this is supposed to improve my life and the lives of others? Luckily now I have found a new church that does not spend so much emphasis on this.

I am a practicing Catholic and have received a lot of love from my parishes over the years and would like this to continue. As a Eucharistic Minister, I see the great love of Jesus and Mary coming to each parishioner as they receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

1. As a 32yo man I wanted to know more about God but at the time (20 years ago) I could not find anyone to help me grow in faith, the courses I attended were not what I was looking for. I needed more than theology or Bible studies—I desperately needed to meet God because I needed meaning in my life. I met the Neocatechumenal way in the late 1980s in a parish in [ - ]. I heard for the first time (despite years in the Church) the good news announced for my life, I received true healing of deep wounds (my history as a migrant) and discovered my vocation to the priesthood. As a priest this community I belong to continues to help me to see the love of Jesus for his Church.

2. I come from a relatively Christian 3rd world country, when I migrated to Australia 30 years ago I was shocked by a very secularised society. I see things have even further deteriorated over the last 3 decades. I see how difficult being a Christian has been for my children and now even my

grandchildren. I felt alone in trying to support them in their faith; despite much expense I do not believe that Christian faith is or can be passed on in Catholic schools. I found a place in my parish of [ - ] where the Neocatechumenal community (a group in the parish) has helped me individually but also in my marriage and in the passing of faith to my children where as a family we could all keep close to Christ. The youth in our parish can participate in a post Confirmation Program that has really been amazing. I think this should be offered to all parishes.

3. I was always in the Church. But I had only a fear relationship with God. Through my life and significant difficulties with my family, my wife, children, work I never knew how God could be of help. I went to Mass but on its own this felt insufficient for the difficulties life throws at you. It felt as though the Church was irrelevant and could not provide any help in the real difficulties of life. Without meeting the Neocatechumenal way I would have left the Church. But through it I was able to have a meeting with Jesus who gives meaning to my life. I wish more people could experience this.

4. I came to Australia in the 80s and was far from the Church. I was in grave danger of harming myself and others because of my unhappiness. A priest in [ - ] was my last hope on a desperate day. He helped me and I became a Catholic (previously Anglican) I returned to the Church. When we moved to [ - ], I was invited to listen to catechesis by our parish priest. Through the Neocatechumenal way, I slowly discovered and believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and accept my difficult history (coming from an apartheid country) and that it was through these difficulties and sufferings that God came to meet me—in the end, a history of love.

I have remained in the Church because of priests who could explain and keep relevant as I grew in knowledge and maturity how the mystery of God, of a Saviour on a cross, embraced me and was waiting for me to embrace back. Being introduced to writers (female and male) who have meditated on the mysteries in our faith and provided clear explanation as to what they have found, and to writers who have probed deeper and contemporary meaning in the Gospels has enriched my faith. I congratulate and thank those men and women who have taken me past the Catholic stereotype of 'follow the rules and you won't go to hell'. Men and women who have treated me as an equal on the journey. I hope this charisma for sharing the depth of our faith continues to be at the forefront of an understanding of Church's mission and that our Church embraces all opportunities and technologies to use these gifted people.

We keep talking about the drop in attendance number in Sunday Masses, yet when we visit nursing homes there are many elderly who would love to go to Mass, but they simply couldn't because no one would take them. Parishes should be given the facility, such as a bus or two, to pick-up the elderly from nearby nursing homes to attend the Sunday Mass. In our experience, we have to rely on our members to pick-up the elderly in our community to attend the Indonesian Mass, but this has been our constant challenge due to the limited resources we have. We also experience a decline in the number of Indonesian young people who attend the Sunday Mass. When asked, they feel they don't get anything from attending the Mass because the homilies are boring. Priests need to step up and improve their methods of delivering homilies, as our youth prefer to listen to some celebrity pastors on YouTube.

I've grown up in a Catholic family, went to church every Sunday, went to a Catholic school but I didn't receive any faith formation after my confirmation. When I started work I was immersed in the ways of the world. I went night-clubbing, coming home all hours of the morning, living a pagan life, but still going to Mass every Sunday. My father died suddenly and I was not reconciled with him when he passed away. This put a big question mark to what use was the Church to me? Also, I was witnessing marriages around me separating, the girl I worked with her marriage lasted 6months. My sister had separated from her husband, and I questioned what is love? How could I love someone for the rest of my life and how could someone love me forever? I had never witnessed forgiveness. In 1986, I listened to a catechesis from the Neocatechumenal community and began walking in the way. In this way which comprised of people of all age groups and nationalities, I have witnessed many miracles. In front of the Word of God, I have witnessed true forgiveness, marriages being

rebuilt, married couples being opened to life, accepting the children as a gift from God. I've witnessed that truly God provides, in front of different situations, emotional spiritual, financial, God through His word, sacraments through the brothers and sisters has manifested himself and provided in abundance. Through this experience God allowed/helped me to be open to Him to find me a husband according to His will. This we've been married for 29 years, God has given us 6 children and 6 in heaven. In my marriage I've seen my pride and arrogance, my inability to love and forgive but constantly I've received a word from God being it from the Bible, or from the sacraments, a homily or from one of the brothers and sisters that has helped me. Above all, a constant reminder of God's love and mercy for me exactly as I am, and a way to stand up and begin again. I've truly experienced the forgiveness of my sins, that God is never scandalised but constantly offers me forgiveness and His faithfulness. I'm grateful to the Church for the gift of a community to walk in faith, for the gift of catechists to help me discover my baptism, to help me grow to adult faith. To help us transmit faith to our children, to teach us the gift of rediscovering the Sunday, the day of rest with the Lord. To pray with our children the psalms of the morning prayer. To witness the formation of seminarians in the community where they walk in faith with the brothers and sisters, where they hear and experience all the trials, struggles, temptations, doubts, joys and especially the faithfulness of God in everyone's lives. I feel this really equips them when they become priests. Also, the fact that they are always accompanied by a partner, fellow seminarian or priest so as they can help and look out for each other, I think this is very important.

I was diagnosed with cancer in 2018. The support from my local church—[ - ] was phenomenal. So supportive in every way. Praying as well as continually checking to see how I was. Thankfully all is well now. My mother was a dedicated and faithful Catholic taking on many roles Church roles in the country town where I grew up. She practiced her faith by helping the priests and helping others in the community. After reflecting upon my faith, I do feel that there are too many rules in the Catholic Church especially the Church of my youth. Things have changed in that way but there is room for improvement.

We have moved parish because of the lack of interest in parish affairs other than money. So once again, financial structures need to be more transparent. Parish priests have too much autonomy and power. This leaves them open to temptation.

I'm one of the women in a rural/remote parish. Women outnumber men when it comes to practicing their faith. We do the cleaning, setting up for Mass, cleaning up after, make morning tea, have busy bees to clean the presbytery or tend the presbytery garden, wash the vestments, organise the rosters for Readers, Offertory, etc., take Office Bearing positions on the parish Council. In 1999/2000, we had a relieving priest for a year whom I felt did not like me to be near the altar during Mass. He preferred male readers, altar boys and male extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist. This made me angry and reduced my respect for him. I felt that the women were (and still are) the backbone of our parish and yet we were considered second class. Three years ago, in my role as a volunteer ambulance officer, I happened to be at the end of a job which was at our district hospital some 43km from my home town. An elderly lady from my town had been admitted to palliative care. She was dying. I went to visit her. She was 90 years old and didn't believe in God, but we had known each other for years and she was aware of my faith and that I practiced. She was in pain and challenged me; "Where's your God now? How can he let this happen (i.e. the pain)?" It got me thinking. For a person of faith who is dying or seriously ill, wanting to have their child baptised, yearning for the sacraments what will happen when we become a priest-less parish? (I think this is not too far away as we are rural—280 km from [ - ], small in number and aging). Will they die without anointing? Will they lose the desire for baptism? Will their faith fade without the sacraments? This truly clarified for me that lay people (men and women) should be encouraged, supported and educated to take up roles to fulfil these needs. Women should be accepted at least as Acolytes and Deacons. Allow and support faith-filled and called people to minister in their community where they have a relationship with and care for those around them.

<p>I as a gay man, grew up in a Catholic family, and within a modern Catholic Church community. I believe that within this community there were accepting, understanding, people; however, I feel the overall Catholic community is less understanding and is afraid of change.</p>
<p>I am an active member of the Catholic Church and have never had any concerns or issues with members of the clergy or teachers, however as I am becoming more aware of the issues and the cover up that has occurred. It is increasingly more difficult to defend my faith and the organisation.</p>
<p>My grandmother and mother were women of unshakeable faith and goodness. Few religious and clergy of my acquaintance could match their Christian qualities apart from some nuns of extraordinary compassion and bravery. The story of Mary McKillop (including her excommunication) inspired me. The nuns included individuals whose adherence to poverty chastity and rebellion when warranted showed me what was possible through commitment to Jesus.</p>
<p>Catholicism is 100% right, a lot of Catholics including unfortunately clergy, in many instances are not so good.</p>
<p>I am a long-time student of sciences, having studied a range of disciplines involving physics, chemistry and currently, biology, I tend to be an analytical person who prefers tangible data. Despite this, I am also aware that there are yet many unsolvable mysteries in the world that science has yet to unravel. I did not grow up in Australia. I was brought up in Singapore, where I attended catechism until the sacrament of Confirmation. During a preparatory camp for confirmation, my classmates and I were in the middle of prayer when we felt a certain presence come in among us. I cannot recall very much more of the time, except a lingering, steadfast belief that there is much more than we can observe that is present among us at any time. It is because of this particular incident that has convinced me of the existence of the Holy Spirit that came upon us at the time, and consequently, of God. I am not the strongest Catholic, but there has always been a solid bedrock of faith in my personality, that has seen me through my times of weaker faith where I nearly left the Church, and it is this that allows me to continue in my belief.</p>
<p>I originally come from Singapore and have been in Australia for almost two decades. I regularly return to Asia and find the churches there vibrant and full of activities. Most Church activities in [ - ] are often limited to retreats, prayer groups, the occasional special speaker or simple game/interaction groups for teenagers. With limited opportunities to engage in social Catholic events for those in the workforce in Australia, I now return to my country bi-monthly to engage in social gatherings with fellow single/working Catholics. I would love to engage in more Catholic social events in Australia and be a part of the Catholic community however I understand that with a growing generational gap in the Church here, and the busyness of the religious in their order/duties, there is little hope of change. Could the Catholic Church in Australia reach out to discuss the situation with parish priests in Asia? My church in Singapore is: [ - ]. It has over 40 ministries. The parish priests oversee all the ministries once a month in a meeting and discuss any issue with the lay person(s) in charge of each ministry. Could something like this be organised in Australia? Each parish in Singapore has a similar setup to engage their parishioners.</p>
<p>My Faith was enkindled by the Dominican Sisters who taught me from five years of age to seventeen. They were strong women of great character with a Faith that was infectious. They taught me my catechism, my prayers and how to pray the Mass. They showed me Jesus love in their daily dealings at school, not without some reprimands at times. Their Faith grew into my Faith and I took it home to my parents who learnt it and grew with it too. Holy Mass was sacred and I gradually got my parents to take me on Sundays. I was allowed to ride my bike to Mass as a ten-year-old so that I could attend morning Mass. I wanted to serve on the altar but only boys could do that! My parents gradually built their Faith story with me and one of my greatest joys was to have them both receive Communion at the Nuptial Mass on our wedding day. They were both faithful servants of Our Lord to their dying day forty odd years later. I give thanks to those Dominican Sisters who ran and staffed schools all over [ - ]. They taught me about God they educated me to tertiary standards, they taught me music and speech and even sport. They gifted their lives to so many Australian children and their</p>

families. They planted the seeds of Faith, Hope and Love in Jesus' name. I still visit my 96-year-old teacher and her words of wisdom warm me and inspire me to stay faithful to my Lord.
As a cradle Catholic, I have been fortunate to enjoy a wonderful faith filled life and to have met and been ministered to by some fantastic priests, who made great contributions to my faith education and my faith in general. I see the Church floundering in the fast-moving world of technology losing adults and youth by not competing with the attraction of the technology. We need to be with them meeting the challenges of the day by providing them with community and a faith education that allows them to discern truth. In doing this the Church in itself must hold fast to the truth and demonstrate the truth of our faith and traditions.
I was forced into religious activities from a young age and had negative experiences as a result.
- Going to Catholic schools since early childhood and have experienced the Catholic sacraments and faith. - Learnt at school about Jesus' life and journeys that foreshadow meaning within our lives.
Unfortunately, I do not have a religious experience as I am agnostic.
I was raised as a Catholic and the church near my house had an Irish priest who would always listen to anyone who ever came up to him. His kind heart and love for interacting with other people inspired me to do so the same.
My faith has been greatly enhanced by the 'few' priests who demonstrate genuine love and care for their flock near where I live. Their churches have evening Masses which make it easy for working people to attend so whilst my own parish does not, I gravitate towards this church. Their knowledge of the Bible is what encourages me to attend this church. I have learned so much about the Catholic faith through "Catholic Answers" podcasts and Q&A, Catholic Answers, based in El Cajon, California, which is the largest lay-run apostolate of Roman Catholic apologetics and evangelization in the United States.
Speak to our community within the parish. Speak to past parishioners who have migrated to other parishes.
I feel uncomfortable when people are bullied because of their sexuality, race or religious background. I have helped others in need. My fish swallowed a plastic rock and died. I had a really bad concussion and prayed. It was gone the next day.
My husband moved here to find a job and without a job in hand, we might never have an opportunity to move here permanently even if we have the rights to live and work here. [ - ] Cathedral was the first church he stepped into and the miracle of Mother Mary blessed us can never be forgotten. Within a week, he got the job and we moved here as a family within 2 months. Ever since, we never moved anywhere but to stay close to the Cathedral and we are still fulfilling our duties by taking our kids to the church and still remind them to belief and GOD'S way and have faith in whatever they do.
In my experience of more than 50 years in Australia, I have witnessed the decline of the presence of Religious in hospitals, as educators in schools, pastoral assistants in parishes, mentors and spiritual guides. They were a great asset to the Church despite the few who brought disgrace. The Safe Guarding officers in parishes, though appearing to be non-functionary, provide a service to anyone who feels they have been subjected to treatment not fitting the role in parish ministry. This has been a good initiative. A good parish priest is vital to the spiritual health and cohesion of a parish community. I have witnessed two run-down city parishes with declining numbers in Mass attendance rejuvenated by enthusiastic, faith filled holy priests. Fr [ - ] was appointed PP of [ - ], a rundown parish. He was not so young at the time but he made a special effort to visit every Catholic family in his parish at their home. This personal contact made such a difference that it wasn't long that [ - ] church was vibrant and alive again. [He], a holy priest, introduced perpetual adoration and surrounding parishes were invited to join the Roster, which I did, and his church flourished. [ - ] was another rundown church about 20 years ago, when Fr [ - ] was appointed PP. The building needed repair, attendance was poor and it was a parish with no parishioners. Fr [ - ], a good homilist and disciplinarian, being a teacher himself, took a keen personal interest in the sacramental programs at

<p>the school especially with the children and their parents. The church and hall was refurbished with seminars held for Adult faith education. Many people travelled distances to attend these for prayer, adoration of the Blessed sacrament and spiritual sessions. [This] parish today has many young people and families attending with Catholics travelling from other areas. The RCIA program is also well attended with two other priests from neighbouring parishes combining to benefit all, in a great spirit of co-operation. A good parish priest can make all the difference.</p>
<p>My Aunt was a Loreto nun in Kolkata, India. I had the good fortune to spend time with her and the other Sisters in the Convent on a daily basis sharing in their simple and happy life. They cooked for themselves with their sleeves rolled up, ate at wooden plank tables sitting on wooden benches and cleaned up after themselves, even though there were servants to do the work! They wore stifling Habits through all the seasons without complaint, ministering to the poor with joy. What beacons of living the Living Word! These women inspired in me a deep and burning love for Jesus and I am eternally grateful to them. The priests on the other hand were always distant, a shadow, to be somewhat feared. Women are natural mothers; they know how to nurture.</p>
<p>I have stopped attending Mass several times over the years but have always returned and it feels like I am returning home. I find peace at Mass.</p>
<p>I am a migrant to Australia and I have found the people and parish priests to be very welcoming. What is sad to see is that parents will make the time on a Sunday and any other day to transport their children to sporting events. The same commitment is desperately lacking when it comes to allowing the children to learn vital life skills by attending Mass and sacramental commitments.</p>
<p>I am an adult convert. My mother is a lapsed Catholic and my Father comes from a Seventh Day Adventist home. I have been able to leave a life of grave sin through the power of the sacraments. I enjoy the Extraordinary Form of Mass. I wish that this form was more easily accessible. I also attend a weekly Holy Hour, weekly confession and daily Mass in either the Extraordinary or Ordinary form. We as a family, pray the rosary daily. Seeing the commitment and fervour of fellow daily communicants makes it hard for me to see any crisis in the Church ...</p>
<p>I am no longer attending Mass on a regular basis. Part of that is that I don't have a sense of community in the Church. The other part is that I have witnessed firsthand the damage done by a rogue priest who sexually abused my beloved sister in her early teenage years. She told the nuns at school and was advised to say nothing because he was a priest. How can you trust an organisation that fails its children? Ironically, she was a devoted Catholic until the end. Me, I don't think I need to attend Mass to have a relationship with God. My parents were very devoted Catholics, praying the rosary every night but when it came to supporting my poor sister, they were the most judgmental people in the world. She attempted suicide in her 40's and they reacted as though she was doing it to deliberately hurt them and didn't see the pain behind the action. How can you perform the rituals and not act with love to those in need? If that is being Catholic, then I am not sure I want to be that sort of Catholic. I would rather be a plain ordinary Christian.</p>
<p>I was once religious but as I grew older, I no longer agree with the Church or its teaching. I believe it is hypocritical and old-fashioned and that it has no place in today's society.</p>
<p>At the moment, the story is one of mistrust and the lack of justice for staff in Catholic schools. Where staff are bullied, harassed and then discarded with no accountability or duty of care by principals. Just about executives watching out for themselves. [ - ] takes no action and staff within schools feel abandoned, under threat, with nowhere to go. My experience and also the experiences of many that I talk to within the Catholic Education System. Hard to stomach and teach when the powers are never accountable.</p>
<p>I was partially brought up Catholic and I remember being traumatized by the teaching of Hell. Here's the thing ... Even if you don't straight up tell a child that if they don't follow your faith that they are going to Hell, they will find out somehow. The internet exists, so do people. People talk, friends talk, and children listen. Children brought up in a Catholic environment tend to know what Hell is, and the extent of the horror it is believed to be. The prospect of an eternity of fire is terrifying for not only children, but for literally anyone. Even though I don't believe in it anymore, and though I do not</p>

<p>believe that I am going to Hell (or that there even is a Hell for that matter), I am still sometimes terrified of it. Sometimes I'm doing something, just minding my own business, when I have flashes of panic: 'I'm going to Hell, I'm a sinner, I'll be cursed to eternal damnation'. This only happens for a few seconds before I remind myself that it's not true and that I'm fine, but it goes to show the extent of the impact that religion can have on children. I personally believe that children should not have to be brought up into a religion. Sure, baptize them at birth if you like, but then let them make their own decisions on their faith.</p>
<p>Because of the actions and example of a saintly brother who established a refuge and kitchen, I volunteer once a week in that kitchen and help prepare lunch for those who are homeless or in financial difficulties. I have met so many lovely men and women. Sadly, I can't remember the last time a priest visited the centre. Says it all, doesn't it?</p>
<p>In the 1970's, I was unable to continue in my marriage to an alcoholic. I applied for and was granted an annulment but later, when I wanted to marry a divorced man (who had previously been married to an unbaptised woman), I was not permitted to marry in the Catholic Church or receive Communion. Why was I, and others in my situation, not as worthy of receiving Communion as anyone else who had made a mistake? Such Church-imposed laws are unjust. Fortunately, I received very good spiritual guidance and pastoral care and after 12 months returned to the sacraments and I have participated into the full life of the Church ever since. I draw great nourishment from the daily practice of Centering Prayer. It is very sad that the Church has become so tied up with dogma and rules, declaring who is 'in' and who is 'out' that the faithful have to disregard some of these rules in order to follow Jesus. I cannot support the rule which refuses Holy Communion to those who sincerely seek it. It should be viewed as food for the journey rather than reward for the good.</p>
<p>Whenever I'm going through a hard time or need God's help, I call for him and I say a prayer.</p>
<p>I feel as though my community (school, church, etc.) shoves it in my face, so much to a point I am sick of it.</p>
<p>I go to a Croatian church, so I only understand a quarter of what the priest is saying. I think that the atmosphere and vibe you get in the church is totally different from anything else.</p>
<p>My family is very Catholic and I attend a Catholic high school, attend Mass every week and celebrate Holy days. These have taught me very crucial life lessons that have helped in shaping my values and beliefs in God and Catholicism.</p>
<p>The openness within a long-standing parish is not always as welcoming and hospitable to new parishioners as they think they are. I have had a couple of moves in my life when I have had to find a new parish to resonate with. Parishioners would do well to remember what it is like to be new to any group or organisation and think about how they can welcome them.</p>
<p>I knew a priest who converted faiths and became a Catholic and was a married man and had a child. He was very 'in touch' with the daily grind and pressures of life, yet he seemed to be able to fulfil his role as a priest. He was a wonderful role model and could minister sympathetically to families in crisis. Wouldn't it be a good move for the Church to allow priests the option of married life as it may attract more men to the vocation?</p>
<p>The experience of faith that has impacted my life is attending a Catholic school. I believe it provides a lot more support and a sense of community through the Catholic Church. Even those who don't follow the faith are included in the sense of "family" that is shared through the faith.</p>
<p>The Church in Australia is there to help and has helped me and my family through many tough times.</p>
<p>Faith has given me hope during tough and depressing times, and it is from my faith that I'm able to cope with anything life throws at me.</p>
<p>The only time I have ever truly believed in God but also truly doubted his existence was 2013 when my Mum was diagnosed with Ovarian cancer and was placed into Intensive Care for a couple weeks. At the age of 11, having to suddenly live with my grandparents for months and knowing mum was in hospital but not knowing why she was in hospital made me truly doubt that there was a God. She didn't show any signs of recovery; in fact, she kept declining in health for months, until finally she</p>

<p>started to fight back against the Chemo and pulled through. I still doubt there is a God or else he wouldn't ever let that happen.</p>
<p>The Church has helped me grow good values and persuaded me to put more effort into those who are less fortunate, in little ways or big ways.</p>
<p>When I truly connected with my Jewish faith.</p>
<p>I have not experienced faith as I am not Catholic and am an atheist.</p>
<p>Grew up in Ireland when Jansenism was rampant with all its associated cruelty, punishment and ostracism—all at the whim of the clergy. Absorbed those values in my childhood, migrated to Australia at aged 16 when my mother died. Unfit and ill equipped to face 'normal' Australian life and without any support, I married the first person who said he loved me, had four children, a marriage failure, a major breakdown, attempted suicide followed by years of counselling. Only through primarily the example of the lived faith in action of friends did I gain my footing and a new life. I experienced only criticism by many priests and Catholic lay people of my divorced state by way of homilies and innuendo. Though I try to live my life in line with the spirit of Christ's message and though out of custom I still attend Mass, I feel distant from the Church whose representatives who through power and influence damaged so many lives. That damage doesn't stop with the original victim. Without recognition and real action on the legacy of its decisions to cover up the evil which existed then and to this day the Christ Message is lost to the world.</p>
<p>My wife and I have found in a Neocatechumenal community in Rome the way that made us pass from practical atheism to faith. Now we are at the service of the Church in Australia as a missionary family with our children, doing our best to bring the good news of Christ's love to all people living in our area, particularly to those who are far away from the Church.</p>
<p>My story of faith started in 1985 when I first heard the Initial Catechesis of the Neocatechumenal Way. Previous to this, I was raised and educated a practicing Catholic by Anglican and Methodist convert parents and Dominican and Marist schools. I thought God was calling me to be a priest from the age of 13 because did poorly at school but always found religious education important. I had a profound sense of goodness because I was afraid of hell and assumed that going to Mass, confession would protect me. I wanted to know more of the wisdom of God and be holy and it seemed that the only saints were priests or religious. When I did attempt to enter a seminary ([ - ] in 1984) I was sent home. I accepted their discernment because I not able to be continent and now felt called to married life. My faith was very immature because I bargained with God: If I did lesser sins, He would save me from grave sins. I entered into deep crisis when I was rejected by a girl and thought God abandoned me. At this point I chose to leave the Church as most of my class mates and brothers did. At my 'last Mass', I heard an invitation to Catechesis in the parish. I attended and formed a Community with others who attended the final Convivenza. This included the priest who walked as a brother but still performed his normal sacerdotal duties. Through the 33 years I have spent 'walking in the way', I have understood that it is necessary to learn faith in a small community, to be obedient to the catechists and to convert at the speed that God allows. The way was difficult because it disassembled all the false ideas I had about God, sin, conversion and baptism. We relied on a 'tripod' of Word (of God), Liturgy and Community. Each week we prepared and celebrated the Word of God from the history, prophet, letters and Gospel and celebrated the Eucharist. Each Month we met and on Sunday to share our experience. And Have a penitential celebration. Our Catechists lead us through the stages of baptism in a real way. If we failed a scrutiny, we repeated it until we passed it. Slowly we came to see the action of God not changing us but using our humanity to do His purpose and learning to trust that God loves us as we are. We learned to forgive and be forgiven. I am married and we have six children I thank God for my history and have a great love for the Church. I am confident that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide us through the hardships to come and we will rejoice in seeing the great works of God in our lives and His steadfast redeeming love at work in the world.</p>
<p>I have joined a Small Christian Community which has helped my faith grow. We read the Gospel and discuss pertinent contemporary questions. I would love the Catholic Church to be less hierarchical.</p>

- 1) Many of the reforms I enjoyed growing up in the 1980s feel like they are being "rolled back". Mass seems to be looking to the past, rather than forward. Changes to the Mass in recent years seem to me to be change for change's sake. There was nothing wrong with the changes Vatican II made to the way Mass was celebrated. The ultimate point is God and faith.
  - 2) The quibbling over the wording of the mystery of faith and acclamations during Mass in recent years seems ridiculous to most Catholics. I believe conservative agendas of the Vatican leadership are partly to blame for unnecessary changes.
  - 3) As a woman, I find it frustrating that when I wear sleeveless dresses with a high neck that leave my shoulders bare, or skirts just above the knee, I am required to "cover up" when reading at Mass. Ridiculous. I'm not wearing mini-skirts or plunging necklines. I am dressed just as conservatively as I would at work, but this is not acceptable at Mass.
  - 4) Some of the Church responses to the abuse scandals have smacked of hypocrisy when the highest leaders in the Church are charged and found guilty of these abhorrent crimes. The work being done now is better, but some think it is too little, too late. The Church needs to stop using silence as a media relations tool and trying to keep things hush-hush and investigate internally. Crimes are crimes and must be referred immediately to the police. Making priests who hear the confessions of criminals stay silent and carry that burden is unfair and makes them complicit in criminal activity. It must take a massive psychological toll on the clergy. The Church hierarchy needs to make it clear that George Pell and others are criminals and act immediately. A lack of quick action just further diminishes the reputation of the Church.
  - 5) The equality of women within the Church is something I think about very often. The glass ceiling is very apparent. I don't accept that only men can be appointed to the highest offices of the Church. I think issues like abuse would be less of a problem if women had more of a say and were more empowered. Having said all this negative stuff, some parts of the Catholic faith have progressed. At least girls can be altar servers now. But there is still a long way to go. I think Archbishop [ - ] has done a great job in recent times given the difficulties he has faced, but he needs to do more.
- Have seen people leave their plastic bags after fishing, and it flew into the sea. Saw a cow eating a plastic wrapper. Plastic bottles left in the bush, seen everywhere. Saw a video of a turtle having a straw removed from its nose as it got stuck there. I met a homeless person in [ - ] and I gave them money. When teachers and students help me.
- I was brought up a Catholic; Mother a Convert, Father Traditional Catholic. Educated by Presentation Nuns ... I am forever grateful to have been blessed by such an upbringing. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THE CHURCH NEEDS TO "Move with the times!" Children today feel the Mass is meaningless, why? When questioning my own children "Why they no longer attend Mass/the sacraments" their response has been that they find the Clergy "Hypocrites" and not involved in "REAL LIFE ISSUES!"
- I moved to Australia from a (third world) country where people's faith was generally accepted and tolerated. I have noticed that in Australia it is generally not well-received if you are a practicing Catholic who agrees with the Faith and its teachings. I have also noticed that Christians of other denominations are much more willing to confront a Catholic and show him/her all the ways in which the Catholic faith is wrong and mislead. This is why I believe that preparing our young people thoroughly and at the right time is and will be vital for maintaining and growing the Catholic Community in Australia. This experience has motivated me to educate myself (I did not realise how shallow my understanding of the Catholic faith was even though I had obtained religious education and preparation in school and I have been Confirmed—and I would consider myself a strong Catholic) using whatever sources I can find—since I generally feel like the knowledge and training I need to defend my faith is not found in my church.
- The Clergy need to know the parishioners, even if it means to wear name tags once a month.
- I attended a Catholic school all my life. I had the best gentlest nuns and teachers. The priests in our [ - ] parish were lovely warm and gentle people. A real credit to their vocations. I can't believe that some poor kids had to go through such terrible suffering by some priests and Brothers. My Catholic school life was wonderful.

I was born in Indonesia, grew up in various parts of Indonesia and in Singapore, lived in South Korea for a while, and migrated to Australia around 13 years ago. My family is a Catholic convert, and I was baptized when I was about 12 years of age. There was one crisis in my life when my only sister (two year younger) suddenly passed away at the age of 17, that triggers me to question my faith, about life, and what I believe, down to the core. For some period of time, I was searching and going astray. It was through supportive friends, Church community and dialogues to priests and religious men and women that I gradually brought back into the Church and embrace my faith again. When I migrated to Australia, I was experiencing a different and contrasting Church landscape, in which the general attendance (and that of young people) is relatively lower and, not many devotional practices offered at the parish level. However, I noticed that for the first time, I encountered a few good priests who are genuine, intense and radiating supernatural charisma especially during the celebration of the Mass and during interactions afterwards. This leads me to appreciate more about the faith, the liturgy, interior aspect of our spiritual life and the call to be 'alter Christus' and contribute more in the life of the Church.

I came to [ - ] and found my Faith and my wife, and together we have brought up 8 children— something that I never thought would happen before coming here. During these years, I have grown enormously as my children has grown—learning alongside them and their friends—staying just one step ahead, doing 'secret' learning at night so that I can 'teach' them the next day. From this experience, I would like to recommend that the Australian Church changes the way she engages with the young people. With the declining numbers of priests in general and young priests in particular, the Church must expand the roles of lay people in Church—lay people who have proper foundation and are practicing their faith. Lay people who can talk to the youth in ways that they find not just interesting but useful. "Faith applied" is my way of talking to my children using case studies, anecdotes and stories. The youth have been to catechism classes, RE class in school, heard countless homilies, etc. so they know the Faith but that is just theory. What does it actually mean? Do they know Jesus? Do they believe that Jesus can help them in day-to-day matters? Have they heard stories about real people whose lives have changed because of God's love for them? Do they know what is causing all the ills in our society today and that evil still exists? Practical things—the young don't have enough life experience to understand and appreciate half the things we tell them. If we keep preaching about high ideals and lofty goals (which by the way are very important and must never be compromised) how will the young relate? They are still self-centred so we must meet them halfway or else we will not meet them at all! The young are the future and when I look around the church during Mass, it is very obvious to me what must be done. Thank you.

Fleeing persecution and praying to get to Australia. The power of the Mass in those difficult times.

The two priests we have in [ - ] are very holy and humble men. They work continually to ensure the word of God should be available to all people. They are encouraging us to help reach out and contact these people. The honchos up in the bishops' place of business should come down and see how wonderful and successful these priests are. Considering the tools (old out-dated rules) they have to work with, they continue to share the word of God, especially by example.

I was raised in a devoted Anglican family (born 1947) with no real understanding or respect for the Catholic Church. I met a Catholic man who I wanted to marry, but with the constricting rules of this Church, it meant I would not be able to marry in my church or bring my own children up in my Faith. So, believing my God would be the same no matter where I was, I converted to Catholicism, married in the Catholic Church and brought up our children in the Catholic religion. They were educated in Catholic schools. It has been difficult as my husband and I had conflicting ideas about what it means to be Catholic due to our different upbringings. I just wanted us to all worship as a family which we have done for many years. Now my 3 children don't attend Mass—they matured in their understanding of Jesus and it didn't equate with what they were hearing at Mass. My husband has died, but before he died we both agreed over the years we both came from opposite ways of thinking and ended up united at the same place with our Faith, which, like our children, did not equate with what we experience in our Mass and Catholic Church. I am persevering with attending

<p>Mass mainly to be support for others who are so full of disenchantment and frustration so we can encourage each other in the hope there will be changes to accommodate our adult thinking. We are mature open-minded, free-thinking faithful people, just trust us without telling us what we must think and believe.</p>
<p>The Catholic Church is my spiritual home. However, the revelations of the Royal Commission into Sexual Abuse in Institutions have shocked my faith in the Church to the core. I cannot believe that the Church is the Church that Jesus would want any more.</p>
<p>I spoke at a Kairos retreat for teenage boys—a powerful talk at a crucial stage at the retreat, which had a strong impact. At a later team meeting, the Retreat Director, a committed Catholic woman, suggested I leave the Catholic Church and become an Anglican priest. She felt my gifts could be better utilised there. I sit through homilies given by people with beautiful hearts who struggle with the English Language and who have been trained to speak in a reverent, monotonous voice which lulls congregation members into a trance—as a committed woman of faith, I have to fight to stay focused, and have to constantly battle not to have the attitude of simply enduring the homily. I fear for my five children—how is the message of Christ being presented to them? One is same-sex attracted and was told by her Religion Teacher that she would be going to hell. My two oldest have left school and fully embrace Gospel values—but do not attend church.</p>
<p>I had a positive experience of the Catholic education system about a decade ago which I intended sharing. My recent experiences have been so negative that I no longer see the relevance of sharing the experience.</p>
<p>We are saddened that our children and grandchildren see little or no relevance in our Church.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I did a course called 'set my people on fire' conducted by flame ministries international in [ - ] that has tremendously helped my faith in Jesus and understand the Catholic faith better.</li> <li>• I try and read the Bible every day, pray every day, impart the Christian faith to my children, try to be a good Christian example to my family and others especially by my behaviour.</li> </ul>
<p>A priest in my recent past was loved by his congregation because he knew them well and he related to them. His sermons were about how the Gospel of the day related to their lives. They were not dry explanations of doctrine. His sermons were short and to the point.</p>
<p>I am a convert to Catholicism in my 20s, over 20 years ago. In that time, I have served and continued to serve in many ministries—RCIA, Youth, Parish Pastoral Council, Proclaimers, Special Minister of the Eucharist, Choir. I have too many stories and do not where to start. I will share the story of a friend [ - ] in my uploaded document. I have also urged the Council Fathers to facilitate more witnessing such as [ - ]'s story.</p>
<p>Orthodox parishes led by a priest who teaches and promotes the orthodox line using the teachings of the catechism leading the faithful to heaven.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I try to spend quality time every day to pray and read God's Word the Bible and attend Mass every week and as often as possible during the week.</li> <li>• I try to live a good Christian life by example to my family and behaviour to others.</li> </ul>
<p>We need to cut the hubris and get down to it. Perhaps we can dance around the toadstools later.</p>
<p>I grew up in a very strict Catholic family. I loved my faith. It gave me a beautiful peace. All this was shattered in 1987 when it was revealed that my young daughter had been abused by our parish priest, who was also my friend. The resultant trauma for my family has been exponential. I lost everything of value to me, my marriage, my family and my life as I felt it should be and my health. This set me on a spiritual journey to find the love of God within myself, so that I can forgive and love unconditionally, including myself. My grandchildren attend Catholic schools, of which I am grateful, and it allows me to retain a connection to my faith in the Catholic way. I know there is a bigger picture in my experience and my wish is that through forgiveness, my heart will remain open to God's beauty and peace will be restored to the Earth.</p>
<p>I am a migrant having arrived in this parish 7 years ago. However, the love and mentoring that we as a family have received from one of the families of the parish have made me feel blessed. I do not know of when or what is our calling but hope that someday it will be revealed.</p>

Over the past 3 years, my husband and my faith in the Catholic Church has been sorely tested since a new priest came to our parish. We tried to work with him in many ways and on many levels but he was not open to growth or advice from others. We have come out of this experience with an even stronger connection to Jesus/ God/The spirit and each other but, are very disappointed not only in the way this priest operated but, how our concerns were handled by some members of the hierarchy when we expressed them. The people who were treated badly have never had some sort of opportunity to reconcile the hurts. All of a sudden at the end of 2018, the priest was sent to the [ - ] I have little faith in the way the Catholic system deals with concerns that people have about a priest so again it comes down to accountability. See attached letters to read the details of our concerns.

I and my family are part of the Schoenstatt Movement in Australia which has given us an education in our faith over the years. It has taught us Sunday Mass is not the only obligation we have as professed Catholics. It was in Schoenstatt we first realised Marriage to be a vocation (something that should also be taught in High schools) That everything we do in our everyday life can be and should be offered to God. This is called Everyday Sanctity. We have experienced our ups and downs in life but our belief in Divine Providence has always brought us through.

An aunt of mine, who has gone to her eternal reward a few years ago, never locked her home when she went out shopping or visiting. She firmly believed the Lord was looking after her and her property. Needless to say, she never suffered a break-in or theft. For me, a shining example of implicit trust and faith in the Lord!!

I was fortunate enough to be taught my nuns —Sisters of Mercy. They talked a lot about Heaven and Hell and instilled in me a sense of right and wrong. This helped me to make right choices growing up. It also drew me closer to Christ.

Three boys from my class at school went to the seminary and became priests. I rejoiced in this, and one of them helped us to celebrate our marriage. All three were driven from the priesthood because they followed a very natural inclination, placed in us all when God said that it was not good for man to be alone, and married. My faith was shaken and I have prayed ever since that our community will recognise God's plan for men and women unbound by men's regulations against it. There have been trying times when I have almost joined other Christian groups who have recognised this error in our teachings and this stress is with me always.

Unfortunately, a sad story ... I left the Catholic faith because of the lack of spirituality and the fear that my children would not learn how to be a Christian! Thankfully Mother Mary was watching over me, and never abandoning any of her children She has been watching over me and my family all my life. But I can only decipher that now retrospectively. Unfortunately, the Catholic Church both in Australia and overseas (when I was an expatriate) shaped me to leave the Catholic faith together with my family. Ironically when we lived in Saudi I learnt more about sacrificing oneself for my faith than I ever did in Australia. Sad reflection of where the Catholic Church not only in Australia but worldwide has been leading the flock.

Fr [ - ] formerly of [ - ] parish, [ - ]. Making the Gospel relevant and engaging for me. Always leaving thinking about what can I do this week to live the Gospel. He is fantastic at engaging the youth and getting community involved. He should be used as professional development for other priests.

Some wonderful retreats have made me stronger in my Faith and having the Mercy Nuns teach me and my sisters had a lasting impression on us—I learnt almost everything about my Catholic Faith from them.

Yes. Our (my wife and I) faith in the Church has been sorely tested over the last three years. After being part of the same parish for most of my life, we had a new parish priest allocated to our parish in early 2016. This parish priest's treatment of parish volunteers was unacceptable, not to mention a number of other serious issues related to his management of the parish. My wife and I wrote to the archdiocese in 2017 and 2018 after we began to see a pattern of behaviour. We met with the bishop at the end of 2018. The priest was moved on by the archdiocese at the end of 2019. I have attached my letter to Archdiocese to the end of this submission. The sad thing about the whole affair was

<p>that, apart from a polite email from the bishop (immediately after we met him), we had no acknowledgement that this priest's behaviour was unacceptable to the archdiocese. There are many reasons why baptised Catholics are not attending weekly Mass or participating actively in parish life. However, there are some simple reforms that could begin to improve parish life. Under the current power structure, the ordained priesthood and hierarchy offer a great challenge and opportunity. The key performance measure for me as a Catholic, and the Australian Church, is, am I bringing those around me closer to God. Or indeed, am I helping people come to know that there is a God who created them and this wonderful universe. Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission, and good luck with the PC process. My wife and I are happy to come over to Canberra (or wherever), to participate and present our journeys to the full PC.</p>
<p>I have experienced both destructive and life-giving experiences during my engagement with the Church. Sadly, most of the destructive experiences have been from clergy who readily exploit the 'power' of their position and have little understanding of what authority is (as opposed to power). Most of the life-giving experiences have been either from individual people of faith extending kindness and compassion to me; and/or from members of women's religious institutes, who have humility and a focus on service.</p>
<p>Yes—The bond of love I share with my wife in our marriage which has been through challenges and only by God's grace, we have grown in our vocation.</p>
<p>The parishes of [ - ], the Vincentian Retreat Centre in [ - ] and [ - ] parish , [ - ] have contributed greatly to my faith experience here in [ - ]. I love the weekly Eucharistic Adoration, Mass and Preaching and monthly Half-day Retreats which takes time to help remind me the Word that is preached and spoken into my life. It helps me be a better mother, wife, Catechist, Church Volunteer, and a responsible and caring sister and friend to those in my life. It helps me reach out and affirm the single mum who knows not God (who I met at Playgroup or Netball field), it helps me be sensitive to the aged in my parish and provide a meal and invite them to my home gatherings celebrating a birthday. Our parish is blest with great holy priests in Fr. [ - ], Fr. [ - ] and Fr. [ - ] and Fr. [ - ] who just got transferred and these priests touch our lives with well-prepared sermons and a true vocation in their life and exemplary model. Their love for Christ in the Eucharist and Confessional radiates. I love the leadership of our Archbishop [ - ] who has done so much to nurture the Church in Australia and continues to do so. I love the Eucharistic processions we have had in our parishes and at the [ - ] Cathedral and having Padre Pio's relics and the rich spiritual experiences we have in our Church. Just the fullness we have here in [ - ] fills my heart. It's something I can pass on to my children, the youth I engage with, in our parishes and all my R.E. children who I catechise. It's all the grace and mercy of the Lord. We as a community of Konkani speaking people from Southern India (but with diverse backgrounds having worked in the Middle East for several years) are grateful to be here in [ - ] and for the Catholic Church that is vibrant and thriving!</p>
<p>I was raised following the true teachings of the gospels with very strong leadership from the priests and Nuns. It has formed who I am and helps me make decisions based on good conscience.</p>
<p>I belonged to the Neocatechumenal Way for a number of years and I can clearly see how this was instrumental in forming my family to continue in the faith. My husband, children and myself were instructed in a way that I had not heard before, the truth about how to live a life with the purpose of the eternal life, this is not easy to hear and not easy to do but that is up to us if we want it or not. The Father has always given us free will, but I saw my kids grow up with their problems but able to put their trust in Jesus the one and only Saviour.</p>
<p>Having taken the groups, I would like to present a story from my experience that encapsulates a concern that crossed both groups. I work in a Catholic school in leadership. A particular incident arose with a staff member that we believed was contrary to Catholic teachings which called into account our 'manner of life' clause. Our first contact with the Catholic Education Office was that it wasn't a problem and that if we had any concerns, we should seek advice from the moral theologian attached to the diocese, which we did. The theologian was disturbed by the situation, believing it did contravene manner of life and a meeting was made between Industrial Relations, leadership of the</p>

school and the theologian. The meeting was held but the office kept the firm stance that there was nothing we could do about this and their advice centred around 'forgiveness' and 'understanding' even though the person had knowingly and with full understanding entered into a situation that she had been informed of as being against Catholic teachings. We ended up going against the 'advice' of CEO, hiring our own lawyers and negotiating a severance. We were very disappointed with the lack of backbone displayed by the office (including the Director of Religious Education)—not standing up for 'OUR' beliefs. But then again, as pointed out by the groups that I facilitated, what are our beliefs? They seem to shift with the sands. (For your information, the situation was not IVF, single person pregnant or homosexuality—choices that have become more or less normalised within the Church).

As a convert in 1968, I have seen a big change in the Catholic Church, and not a good one, with clericalism too tight for lay participation. There are many outstanding people who need to be involved in decision-making and planning, including fantastic women who seem to be ignored but can offer much for the Church to grow. However, there are great parish priests who include the laity and those who close the doors to ideas from people better qualified than themselves. Personally, I am disappointed that my faith is not shared by younger generations who are leaving the Church in droves. The young ones are very aware of what is going on in the Church and have lost faith in the leaders.

My former parish priest, Father [ - ], was instrumental in shaping my faith through his gentle and kind manner over a number of years. I came from the Uniting church and after marrying my husband (a strong Catholic) in 1992, accompanied him to attend [ - ] parish ([ - ]). It wasn't until Father [ - ] commenced in the parish that I felt welcome and a part of the community. I completed the RCIA programme in 2009 under the guidance of Father [ - ]. Father [ - ] transformed the parish into a thriving, welcoming community a relatively short time after he commenced his post. He is an individual who is able to connect effectively with his congregation. His empathy, humility, inclusiveness and servant leadership have been an inspiration to me over the years. In my role as a teacher at [ - ], I have also witnessed the immensely powerful effect Father [ - ] has had on our students, some of whom come from families who are disconnected or distant from their faith. His active involvement and participation in College life over a number of years has given the students a faith-filled role model who is able to relate to them, pray with them and inspire them to make a positive difference in the lives of others. I feel very blessed to have experienced Father [ - ]'s guidance over the years. He is sorely missed at [ - ].

Parishes that are lively, relevant and have a prayerful priest are rare. That visitation in the PARISH BECOMES a norm and students in the Seminary are given elocution lessons and practical ways of making a homily relevant.

My story: I was a superstitious and a "free thinker" married to a lapsed Catholic girl. And being judgemental I did say that the Catholic Church will be the last Church that I'll join, and was even thinking of converting to Muslim for material gains. But God is merciful. In short, by attending LISS (out of curiosity), it has freed me from many bondages and put our ailing marriage life back on track as God intended. Mine is just another simple conversion story, but it would be beneficial if the Catholic Church make an in-depth study into Dioceses in Australia or even those overseas that runs LISS annually. See it for themselves firsthand.

For me, the journey to the Secular Franciscan Order has given me a sense of belonging to a family that is great in making saints. Over the centuries, I am connected with the Franciscan family who have gone before me and with the Franciscan family present in the world now. In [ - ], we don't have the same sense of family as we lack Franciscan friars and Poor Clares and other members of the third order of the Franciscan Family. We are learning to take our place as Franciscans through our Secular Franciscan vocation and to realise that we are the presence of the Franciscan family here in [ - ]. The Secular Franciscan Order has helped me grow in my faith, in understanding the lay vocation and how to bring that Franciscan peace, simplicity and prayerfulness to my daily life. There have been many Secular Franciscans who have inspired and challenged me to live my vocation more deeply.

[Group] have been greatly influenced by the story and example of the Sisters of St John of God who, as a Congregation have spent 150 years bringing to life the healing mission of Jesus for the people of Australia. The [Group] believe that what the Sisters did is true Christian evangelisation, and are endeavouring to carry on this Mission, bringing healing, compassion and hope to all who need it.

I was born and raised in England, moved to Australia in 2003 and am now a proud Australian citizen. In England, the Anglican faith dominates and often I felt ashamed to be a Catholic, particularly in the higher echelons of society, e.g. at Cambridge University where I was an undergraduate. Coming to Australia, I saw and delighted in the strong position of the Catholic Church: the large number of Catholic schools, the Catholic Universities (non-existent in the UK), Catholic hospitals (non-existent in the UK), and Catholic residential colleges at universities, a higher percentage of Catholics and smaller percentage of Anglicans in society as a whole. Being in the majority, Australian Catholics had a relatively easier life and therefore there were fewer challenges to strengthen their faith, until perhaps now when the attacks are from the secular parts of society. Despite that, through its Catholic schools, universities, hospitals, etc., the Catholic Church has enviable power and position that it should use carefully. It starts at the grassroots. The individual parishes need to examine how they can reach out to their communities and grow their engagement and make the Church relevant to those around them and strengthen their faith. There is no time for complacency—we must move swiftly! As a mother, I would like to see the Church reform itself to be relevant to my child and other people of her generation: to reflect the teachings of Jesus through its actions, to reach out and help others, and to be inspiring and dynamic in its leadership. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Plenary Council.

My experience of the Catholic school system is mixed. I am grateful for the many inspirational teachers who gave 110%. However, the reaction when, on a number of occasions, we tried to discuss concerns with senior staff members were left a sense of betrayal and confusion. A closed rank policy seemed to be the modus operandi for many in charge and through that our elder son ended up a victim of ambition in a school where the principal was more concerned with high marks and the needs of a good student. Trying to seek justice at a higher level proved a fruitless exercise. A total lack of empathy. Our concerns brushed aside in a condescending manner implying they were inconsequential. For decades practicing Catholic parents have been expressing legitimate concerns only to be dismissed as 'traditionalists; or 'pre-Vatican II'. This is both presumptuous and unfair. Parents, like canaries in a mine, are often the first to sense danger. The Church needs canaries! Another disappointing and ongoing experience is the number of good Mass attending Catholics who simply don't want to know or hear anything unpleasant. If any social issues that directly or indirectly affect Church teachings are raised the general reaction is 'that can't be true—you must be exaggerating', etc. or 'well that's none of my business'. Regrettably this is an across-the-board reaction and not confined to those who sit in the pews. The consequence of this indifference is that as a community, we are like frogs sitting in cold water that is gradually being brought to the boil! Just like the bridesmaids at the marriage feast we have been caught napping when we should have been alert ... and proactive. I am 80 years old and at the end of my run but live in hope the Holy Spirit will guide the Plenary Council 2020 to a new awakening and renewal for all Catholics in Australia.

The members of our group all had stories to share about experiences they had in parishes where they were made to feel unwelcome. They also commented on a sense of "judgement" when attending church. One teacher sadly shared a story of an elderly parishioner who poked children at Mass with her walking stick if she considered them not to be responding appropriately. A story was also shared about a young student at our school who attends Mass regularly with his family and has built a positive relationship with the parish priest. This particular child is always delighted to see the priest when he visits the school. For this child, the connection between the Church and school is very valuable.

I have spent 34 years developing my faith, understanding it and have experienced many difficult situations where I can truly say have been the best opportunities to become closer to God. I can truly say that I previously thought going to church and being good to people was enough to get me

into heaven, I now understand that this makes me no different to anyone from other religions such as Buddhism or Islam or even Atheists. As negative as this may sound, it has allowed me to really hear what God is saying to me and has allowed me to devote myself to God and in turn, I am a better wife, sister, daughter and society member.

Two things: churches who have perpetual adoration. Without this, I could not go talk to God anytime face to face. I need this. Secondly, my Catholic charismatic community where I share my faith with like-minded families who form friendships with my children and we together foster our faith through praising God in all situations. This does in no way replace my parish but enhance my faith and leaves me less lonely as a Catholic in society.

1. In my parish, some people were unhappy about the amount of chatting that was going on before and after Sunday Eucharist. Some of these people were on the Parish Council. In order to curb this 'noise', they asked for a slide to be shown before and after Mass that said "Jesus is present in the Tabernacle, Body, blood, soul and divinity". I had a chance to speak the President of the parish Council and express my opposition to this. Firstly, I don't think the message would have had the effect that was desired by the few who proposed it. Many people in the parish, including myself, were perfectly aware of the real presence of Jesus in the tabernacle. My greater objection was the imposing of someone's idea of respect and reverence on the Sunday community Eucharistic gathering. I expressed that reverence was something that came from the heart, and not imposed by another person. Also, that the many ageing people who attended Mass would have drawn and provided great strength from their communal interactions, including all those whose hearing was failing. Also, we have precious few children in the parish as it was, and I was opposed to anything that would make parents of young children feel more scrutinised or unwelcome. I believe that the sense of belonging and connection is a major factor in keeping people coming to church, and a false sense of reverence at the Sunday communal celebration of the Liturgy was profoundly against our mission as a parish.

2. A few years ago, some priests from the Vatican were on media announcing about how the ashes of a cremated person needed to be placed in a specific sacred place, rather than scattered. I cannot describe my frustration at this. With all the issues being faced by the Church presently, that this would be something to gain exposure was deflating and depressing. Shortly before, my sister's son had died of cancer as a young man. My sister and her family, devout Catholics, had their son cremated, and scattered his ashes in the ocean. We all believe unequivocally in the resurrection of the body. This was certainly not diminished by their actions. This statement seemed to belittle the profound truths of our faith, which reach beyond space and time, certainly when talking about how our bodily self will be transformed when we share eternal life with Jesus forever. My sister nearly left the Church over this. She said: "Oh, so it's OK to bury someone, their body rots, is eaten by a worm, which is dug up, used as bait, thrown into the ocean and eaten by a fish, which we catch and eat." This is better?" Her words had power. Our understanding of the resurrection from the dead is so much more than human rituals. What impact would this statement have had on all the people who have never been able retrieve the body of a loved one? This is the kind of thing that makes the Church (the laity, who make up the vast majority of the Body of Christ) think that priests really have no idea.

My faith journey has evolved through becoming involved in parish life and groups within the parish. I was not a practising Catholic but by chance decided to try attending Mass. I was fortunate that there was a very good priest at the parish and listening to him made me realise what I had been missing out on and that my life was missing something very important. This began a journey of discovery of Jesus. I started attending Mass regularly but found it hard to make friends and feel like I was part of the parish. I have always had a desire to help others and decided to joined group called Personal Advocacy Service and through sharing faith and life with others less fortunate than myself I have finally found fulfilment in my life. This was challenging at the start but has become the most amazing experience. I believe that we can all learn so much from each other and by my experiences and the challenges and friendships along the way, all contributed to ongoing growth of the faith and the

realization this is the most important thing in life. The realization that everyone's ones needs are the same regardless of the abilities or disabilities we may have is life-changing. The love, friendship and dedication shared in these groups are an inspiration to the people around us. Helping our friends to have the opportunity to participate in the parish Community is a wonderful thing for them and everyone in the parish. To be part of an accepting and loving parish is what I believe will attract people back to our churches. As my faith continues to grow, I have become more involved with other areas of the parish and Church life. The more involved I have become in such a short time, the more my faith grows and the more I want to share and learn. Having the opportunity for Perpetual Adoration has been very important to me. I have a busy life and often find it hard to fit everything in. Having the chance to spend time with Jesus, I think has made my journey so amazing when I look back on how empty my life was. I pray that my family will also find their way back to God.

My faith was shaped by the late understanding that I needed to seek catechism myself ... it DID NOT come from attending Mass, in fact, this could have very easily been how I lost my faith had I not found good solid books that explained what Catholics truly believe. The more I read, the more I am devastated by the 'Protestantism' of our beautiful Holy Mass and the lack of spiritual understanding from the congregation as to why 'things' are liturgically sacrilegious and dangerously heretical ... but the hierarchy doesn't do ANYTHING! Very confusing for a Catholic bringing her 4 children to Mass weekly and daily when possible, confessing weekly and encouraging the children to pray the Rosary daily ... a struggle met by Harry Potter, yoga, mindfulness and gender ideology at 3 Catholic schools that are being attended ... my prayer is that by the Grace of God, they will NOT lose the faith that has been God given to them by those who claim to be 'Catholic Educators' ...

When we have had great pastoral leadership, creative liturgy, openness of heart and efforts to build community and welcome people without judgement, our parish community has thrived. When the conservative side of the Church has taken hold and put rules before people our Church/parishes have diminished in size. Hypocrisy will always cause people to leave our Church. We must be the face of the compassionate, creative Christ.

My 4 children have attended 5 Catholic schools/Colleges are IN ALL I have had to address the occult and heretical beliefs being taught, from Harry Potter, to yoga, to celebrating the occult in Halloween to no purgatory! A child in 2019 attending a Catholic school will come out disillusioned with the Catholic faith, full of protestant ideas and occult practices ALL because the teachers are NOT catechised! I am appalled by the behaviour of teachers at Mass, short dresses, singlet tops, gossiping with each other and allowing the students to behave in a similar fashion—is Our Lord present or not?

Church in Australia needs much deeper work of preaching the Gospel to receive the gift of conversion to have an adult faith to love God and to love others.

Church needs a work of preaching the Gospel. To experience the mercy of God on our sins through his son Jesus Christ.

I love the Church, its history and its central message of the Gospel. Connected to this, though I can't easily see myself joining another church, I am still aware of its failings. I want to be Catholic, for all sorts of reasons—theological, pastoral, communal, historical, traditional, etc. But it's not always easy to remain. My sister went through a separation/divorce some years ago. Then about 10 years ago, she wanted to get her broken marriage for some years annulled—she wanted to for all sorts of reasons including having never considered her marriage a marriage (as such) and wanting to remain in communion with the Church. Short version, the process was so tedious and trying, with so little pastoral concern or love shown from those in the Church she dealt with that I was appalled. What she experienced was simply a Church trying to look after its rules, making people jump through hoops on the premise of staying true to the sanctity of marriage. Both her and myself know the Church's teaching, we're not idiots—I understand the theological truth therein, but that experience only a decade ago reminded me of how pastorally incompetence members of the Church and THE CHURCH'S STRUCTURES can be. It is not only sad, it's flat out wrong. If the love of Christ is not experienced in the Church, then it has no right to the title of being 'the Church'. It rocked her, and

though I believe she still sees herself connected to the Church in some way, she is rather ambivalent about her faith these days, that from someone who was as committed a lay Catholic as you could find in her younger days. I myself am able to see past it, but that is the cost of institutions that run by a "rule book" and look after the institutions first and the members second. On the other hand, I'm also fully aware of the love and truth that flows through our Church. This should be celebrated more than it is and effort and resources should be invested heavily to get good teachers and preachers (not just priests) able to proclaim the Good News—and not just an archaic Catholicism that pleases a vocal but shrinking minority (there should be a place for that in the Church, but not the all of it), but preaching that connects with people in their real lives. I've seen this done, and it simply must be put where it matters (in Eucharistic services for example as part of homilies) and in our schools (in sacramental formation for example). All said, I'm here to stay and I want to serve, but I feel I'm not part of particularly large contingent ... which does sadden me. At the same time, I believe in hope. The calling of this Plenary Council and its process, for example, gives me hope that the Church 'gets it' or at least is trying. I thank God for the Church and pray for all of us called to belong to it.

I had the good fortune as a teenager of being in a parish where the priest was a married former Anglican priest. His wisdom, life experience and the humanity that came from his immersion in family life informed his sermons, and his relations with parishioners of all age groups and backgrounds.

The Neocatechumenal Way community has helped me to see myself, to discover my reality and my sins. And nonetheless, to discover the Love and Faithfulness of God. Although I'm a born Catholic, after receiving holy communion and going to Sunday Mass are not enough to have adult faith.

I have been deeply blessed to have encountered the Australian Young Christian Students in school whom I joined as I wanted to change the world. I soon realised this was a call from God to love and serve and I became Catholic. Along my journey, I have been mentored and encouraged. Being a woman, I have been given lots of opportunities to grow, lead and learn. My most profound religious experiences have been visiting people in jail where I truly experienced meeting Christ in prison. My faith has truly grown as I have sat with Aboriginal people sharing about their Catholic faith but also their cultural knowledge. As I learn about Aboriginal culture, I see the connections to our faith. In recent times, my relationship with my partner (we are not married) has been one of the most deeply spiritual encounters where my relationship with God has flourished. It has been the connection to the Divine Feminine, the Sophia God. In my embodied sexual relationship, I have grown as a person and feel a deep connection to God. This has outflowed into my relationship with those around me. This relationship, a loving, faithful, committed relationship is not viewed as positive in the Church as we are not married. I think we need to be able to have conversations about how God is working in our lives and relationships without feeling like we will be judged. I speak to so many women in marriages who have viewed sex in such a negative light rather than a positive thing. We need to revisit Theology of the Body and explore how the Body of Christ is experiencing their incarnational sexual realities. My faith grows in small Christian communities, who meet to talk about our life.

I was a secular man, a failure by the standards of society. Divorced, broke, abandoned and in despair. Then I was \*personally\* handed an invitation to listen to catechesis given in the parish by the Neocatechumenal way. The fruits of that invitation and the Holy Spirit, is that I entered a Catholic marriage, have 5 children of that marriage, and was baptised after 10 years of formation. In all sincerity I tell you, I needed every moment of those 10 years to see myself as I truly am, and to see the love of God for me and my family, through his son Jesus Christ. I am a pagan who welcomed the Word of God and converted. No Catholic ever knocked on my door with an invitation. I give thanks to God for the instrument of the Neocatechumenal way, my life, and the blessings of my children.

Having converted to the Catholic Church and witnessed first-hand the acceptance of the secular world by other Christian faiths, it indicates to me that the Catholic Church, if it's going to retain and grow its flock, MUST keep to the truth and stand up to the pressures from the secular world.

I prayed the Chaplet of Divine Mercy beside a dying fellow parishioner and the next day she died. I asked the priest "what time?" and was happy to hear that it was 3pm, the hour of Mercy I have since prayed the Chaplet beside others who were dying and they have all died at 3pm. The exception was one who died at 4pm, but I was relieved when I realised that that was daylight saving time and the real time was 3pm. This devotion should be encouraged in the Church. Priests overlook the requirement that they should speak about Divine Mercy on the feast of Divine Mercy and display an image of Divine Mercy. This neglect should be addressed.

I have had a lovely experience of faith, Catholic education, parish experience and Catholic relationships that have led to a life driven by social justice, love and action. I have so many positive interactions with Catholics working on the ground and doing good but so few positive stories when it comes to dealing with the hierarchy and leadership of the Church and Catholic Education. I am familiar with a number of excellent Church documents and teachings and yet so rarely hear these referred to in any useful way by the contemporary Church and I see many lay people treat their clergy so differentially that it is no surprise that those same clergy appear to have no idea what is really happening in the world. If the Church was not such a significant employer in Australia I think the number of people who identify as Catholics would be significantly lower.

Yes. As is clear above, I think we, the Church, have some hard times coming up and some hard questions to address, especially in the area of sexuality. I want to be honest and transparent: it is clear from my submission that I favour what many people would call "conservatism" in matters of sexual morality. However, I did not always favour it, so I am aware how the Church/bishops are a bit between a rock and a hard place here. My husband and I have 7 children. I was extremely fertile and was sufficiently "conned" by 20–21st century culture to see my fertility as a curse rather than a blessing. But without the Church, I would not have those children. True, they are not perfect, and I am now praying long and hard for them, (especially those who have left or turned against the faith), but (irony again) they owe their very lives to the Church's teaching. We seesawed between NFP then using contraceptives and then trying NFP again. There were times that I considered the prolonged abstinence an unbearable pain, and said so. But at that time of my life I also found fasting almost impossible—and now, because my ATTITUDE has changed, it's not so bad ... it's quite do-able. (Irony again: I took to fasting as part of an effort to storm heaven for grace for one of my children, and guess what? Things are changing for the better in his life, bit by bit.) So prayer and fasting does change things, by the grace of God. Perhaps if I had appreciated this earlier, I would have offered my real suffering with NFP for those children, and I would not have needed quite so much prayer and fasting now. If the Church had given in to pressure from people like me, people like me would have been the losers. I would not have my children, and having them (with my marriage), is far and away the greatest gift of my life. Similarly, when our marriage hit a rough patch, friends fasted and prayed for us—and I am more grateful to God than I can say, for inventing/designing marriage in the first place. Can I get this across to my own children? Not yet. I am praying among so many other things, that God give us the opportunity to have the conversation we need to have, and that He open their hearts and minds. But my experience is, the Church must not abandon the truth, just because people don't want to hear it or more likely, the devil closes their minds and hearts to it. We need to pray and maybe fast about it. I still don't like fasting!!

I have been watching the many reactions to the guilty verdict in the George Pell child sexual abuse trial. I have worked in child protection policy in government and the non-government sector, including related to child sexual abuse. It goes without saying that child sexual abuse is abhorrent in all its forms. However, given my exposure, it no longer shocks me. Allegations being made against a high-profile Catholic leader, unfortunately, do not surprise me either. Time and time again, similar allegations against clergy have been substantiated. I will admit I was slightly surprised by the Pell guilty verdict. However, I did not hear the testimony of the victim. The jury did and they were convinced beyond a reasonable doubt. I understand the challenges of the announcement of the appeal. However, the Church's public statements and response to this issue were cold and completely lacking in insight and compassion. Particularly given the Church has facilitated this abuse

through their processes protecting their priests and privileging the welfare of the Church over the safety and welfare of vulnerable children. Yet, even this no longer surprises me or most Catholics, such is the loss of faith in the Church leadership. I felt extremely angry and deeply betrayed. I sat in church in [ - ], listening to the priest read a letter from the leadership that said the jury “chose to believe one man’s word over another’s” and expressed shock that this could lead to a conviction. If anyone in the church that day was victims of sexual assault, they would have heard loud and clear the message that they should not come forward, they would not be believed and that the Church would protect the powerful and not the vulnerable. Although my faith in the existence of God and the truth of Jesus has not swayed, my faith in the Catholic Church has been shattered. I now have serious reservations about the authority of the Catholic Church. Many Catholics are outraged, many are considering walking away from the Church. But a number of ordinary Catholics started making excuses for this behaviour, dismissing the accusations as a persecution of their religion, insisting the Church should be judged by its good actions but not its bad ones. For me, this was an indication of the true crisis of the poor leadership around this issue. Ordinary Australian Catholics, who do not know George Pell personally (although from my experience, most people who know abusers intimately have no idea what they are capable of) are insisting he could not do what he has been convicted of. They cannot be reacting to the truth of the matter, but must be reacting to the idea that a Cardinal could do this. The damage that these Catholics are doing is far more significant than they could realise. They are demonstrating that the Church, and not just its hierarchy but ordinary Australians, are more determined to protect the Church than to protect victims of child sexual assault.

Many of the priests are smart but unfortunately, they don't have the right audiences.

A friend of mine works in campus ministry at the [ - ]. A couple of years ago a young man named [ - ] knocked on his office door and asked how he could become Catholic ([ - ] was raised Pentecostal). When asked why he wanted to become Catholic, [ - ] said he had been doing a thorough study on the sixth chapter of St John’s Gospel—as well as reading Aquinas’ teaching on the Eucharist—and he was convinced that the Real Presence was a real thing and that he needed it in his life. [ - ] lived near my parish, so my friend at [ - ] passed him onto me. As I prepared [ - ] for his Confirmation, it became clear to me that he had a number of Pentecostal friends who had been asking similar questions to himself. In due course, I began meeting with a growing number of them, to pray together and discuss questions they had about Catholicism. As I write, five have become Catholic or are about to, and several others regularly attend Mass with them. They are all keen to assist other disaffected Pentecostals who might be exploring similar themes to themselves. Needless to say, this group has been a real consolation for me amidst the difficult headlines of recent years. The fact that a group like this could find themselves drawn to the Catholic Church in the face of the various scandals strikes me as a clear work of the Holy Spirit. They have been drawn by the tradition, the Magisterium, the liturgy, the Church’s social outreach and charitable works, and most especially the Eucharist. Convinced disciples like this will no doubt be fruitful instruments for the Lord, and we should do all we can to support them. (See [ - ] for an interview with [ - ] about his path into the Catholic Church).

Father [ - ] was our parish priest until recently (OLM [ - ]). He showed us all how to love one another. He is a true follower of Christ in that we can see a human being overcome all of their prejudices and judgements and truly love other human beings.

I am a practising Catholic. I love my faith. Cannot live without my faith. My faith has sustained me during many years of living in a family where my father was very difficult to live with, harassing my mother and threatening one of my brothers. He eventually committed suicide. My mother, despite the very unhappy years had deep, deep faith in her Catholic faith, till the day she died. Always went to Mass and said the rosary, every day till her death. My inspiration to keep my faith in very, very difficult times. My concern is my four children between 37 and 33. They came to Mass with us, every Sunday and Holy days of obligation, till the day they left school in year 12. My two sons were altar boys from year 4 to year 12, one of my two daughters read at Mass. Felt confident our children will

continue to practise their faith. The Sunday after their last day at school, they made the decision they no longer need to practice their faith and stopped coming to Mass with us as a family. In the years since my children left the Church, I feel disappointed and distressed that my children have not attended Mass since they left school. Disappoint and distressed, they have chosen a life style that does not reflect the teachings of their Catholic faith. My feelings are, the schools and colleges have let me down as a parent, trying to keep our faith alive in our family since my first child was born. The teachers, in 12 years of our children's time in the Catholic Education system, should have had a bigger impact on our children's faith, compared with the priest's sermon at Sunday Mass, trying to make their sermons relevant to all ages and in 10 to 15-minute sermon/teaching. The impact of the experience of watching my children lose, then lost their faith despite being raised in a practising Catholic family and 12 years attending a Catholic school. I know nothing is more painful to parents today than the rejection, disinterest, by their older children in Church, religion, worship of all the outward expressions of faith. I also know that no human being can give faith to another no matter how much loved. All that we can do is present God's invitation to faith and watch our children's journey. Each one has his or her own private pilgrimage to make. Parents can assist, they cannot conduct it or guarantee the outcome. A few quotes from unnamed source, but read a fuller version at every Sunday and week day Mass, to remind me.

The arrogance and impression of 'boredom' with urban career priests is palpable, and does nothing to inspire the fire of faith within parishioners. An army is only as good as it's Generals, and the same applies to a parish and the Church. If a priest is only using Mass and the parish as a 'waiting point' for promotion, then they have no impetus or motivation to do anything good, positive or motivational. To be promoted, they must receive the overwhelming blessing of the parish. The most passionate and galvanising priests who are a force of good for the Church are the priests that have faced adversity, can talk from experience of their own suffering and the suffering of their parishioners. How you can you inspire faith in the parishioners when you are not inspired yourself? Remember that when the apostles lead the congregations, they had received the calling AND were suffering from persecution by the Jews and the Romans. You don't see this in the 1st world Catholic Church anymore, so the priests just become automatons.

My children have attended Catholic schools since kindy, I have noticed the teachers and principals are not entirely into their faith. Parents baptised their children to get them into Catholic schools but 95% don't even attend church regularly. Of that 95%, 30% may attend Mass at Christmas or Easter??? I come from Asia where there are many religions and races. I find it very disappointing.

While I am still a practicing Catholic, I found as I grew into adulthood that in order to become more aware of what it means for me to be more Christ-like. I have had to seek additional guidance to bring about a deeper understanding of how to live in the world with Christ as my centre. In my experience, the Church is failing to help each of us come to a deep and meaningful understanding that Jesus is our Way, and our Truth, and our Life.

When I was watching the inauguration of Pope John Paul II and saw all the men in their "uniforms" dictated by centuries-old fashion, I thought there is the problem of the Catholic Church. Not a woman to be seen. Celibate men making decisions on females' lives. Women have always taken steps to control their fertility. My grandmother died at childbirth having her 8th child leaving a grieving family. Unlike a lot of men of that time who put their children in an orphanage, my grandfather had the means to support his large family. I had the same problems with child birth and could have been a statistic if I had my children in earlier decades. I have used my God-given talents to educate children including those Aboriginal students in remote schools instead of over populating the world. I know of a woman in my town and an Aunt who was told by the local priest to stay with her violent husband and continued to live with ongoing abuse. Do women have no rights? My daughter is currently going through a divorce. Her husband is not physically violent but does not treat her with respect and she is on anti-depressants. Her husband is not following the directions in the Bible of how you should treat your wife. Does the "Church" have the right now to deny her communion after the years of her trying to make her marriage work? Marriage, intimacy, family

<p>dynamics need to be lived to be understood. The Church hierarchy has become so patriarchal insulated from the real world.</p>
<p>We live in an isolated Community 300 kms from the City. At times we feel forgotten spiritually. Our children and grandchildren are often required to travel to the city for education and with limited Catholic Boarding schools available are often educated in other Religions. They don't ever seem to pick up their Faith again. Our services are shrinking in all areas and we are often called on to donate to city causes where we have no connection and none of these Catholic Charities consider our needs. Although the internet may help with bringing us closer, most of the older generation still prefer face to face. Many have poor computer skills.</p>
<p>I am a committed Catholic. I love my Church both in Australia and in Ireland. I have so much to be thankful for to the Catholic Church and how it has made me into the person that I am today. I can see beyond the faults and failures, hurts and betrayals of the Church and realize that when all is said and done, it is about my faith journey and where I stand before God. My faith has been strengthened, not weakened or destroyed. I bear no grudges or condemnation against the Church that I grew up with and that some would say was controlling and domineering. To this day, I appreciate the Catholic Church's teaching on natural family planning. See Attached PDF for full story.</p>
<p>I grew up in a War Service Land Settlement farming area some 6 hours away from the nearest city. We had a hard-working amazing priest who was truly one of the people and had to travel long distances to cover vast areas. We also had amazing nuns who also travelled long distances in a little V.W. beetle on dusty gravel roads to give us our first taste of scripture (my siblings and myself attended when we could but under threat of severe punishment from my father if found out). My mother encouraged and helped us to get to these lessons. As the eldest of a family of six children, life was often difficult and It felt like God did not hear my prayers but I never stopped praying or believing. I wish that I had had the 'superior' learning of my city friends (where I now reside) when it comes to Cannon law and dogmatic Theology. Today I recognize many miracles in my life and pray always for knowledge of God's will for me and the courage to act accordingly with love and compassion in an ever increasingly secular world. The challenges I face, I always see as opportunities for me to draw closer to my loving God. The challenges our broken Church face today, I see with renewed hope as wonderful opportunities to become honest and more relevant to living the way Jesus called us to.</p>
<p>For me, walking the Camino de Santiago or the Way of St James was enlightening. Walking from St John Pied de Port in France to Santiago de Compostela in North Western Spain was a wonderful time to contemplate the timelessness of our faith; to walk across country, through villages with inspiring churches from simple chapels to majestic cathedrals as a pilgrim after so many over the last thousand years. The architecture of the old churches intrigued me the most; thinking about the timeless beauty of these buildings and the spirit that inspired them.</p>
<p>I was disgusted by the [ - ] Archdiocese's lack of support for the Church's teaching on marriage in 2017. It was Baptists who I found common ground with, in supporting God's vision of marriage. I was condemned in my "Catholic" parish for supporting traditional, biological marriage and campaigning for the Coalition for Marriage. The non-Catholic Principal and Vice Principal of my children's high school told me that they could not guarantee the safety of my children at school due to my "Bigotry". That opened my eyes to the homoheresy within my Church and made me question the faith that has sustained me throughout my life. Being told by a parish priest that a serving acolyte certainly had the right to tell the young boys within his teaching charge at a high school that Same Sex marriage was fine; and that he could continue as an Acolyte has seen me pray for the conversion to Catholicism of my local parish priest and Archbishop. It did, however, force me to learn about white martyrdom and reinforced my prayer life.</p>
<p>I am an Irish traditional Catholic who has never left the Church. At 60 years old, I am now considering that if change does not happen very soon, I am done with Catholicism. Can you imagine how our young people feel who have not had the extent of life with the Faith Community that I have</p>

<p>had, we have probably lost them forever. I long in hope for change. It's overdue. Please do not old-fashioned conservative Catholics destroy our Church by resisting change.</p>
<p>I have come from a deep, spiritual and growing faith in another country. Australia's faith is dry and stale. It is not alive. It is a clerical and institutional faith that relies on Catholic mums and dads wanting to send their kids to a Catholic school thereby ensuring the longevity of the faith. But whilst the Catholic schools are full, the churches remain empty on a Sunday. This institutional approach to the faith is no way to grow a Church but is perhaps a way of keeping the Church on life support. We need to bring the Spirit of God back into the Catholic Church of Australia. We need a new Pentecost. A revival of the faith in our youth, our young adults, our middle age parents. We need to make the Church relevant again and the only way we do that is by making one's faith personal and deep so that Sunday Mass is not a chore but a weekly desire. We need to pray for an outpouring of the only one of the Trinity that is still ever present in our daily lives and activities, the Holy Spirit. Without people reconnecting with Jesus as their personal Lord and Saviour, the Church is doomed to decline and I fear become a shadow of its former self. The average age in the church is somewhere in the 60s for both parishioners and priests and that gives us 20 years max before the Church is nothing but a novelty.</p>
<p>Among the many apostolates, I've been involved in the Billings Natural Family Planning work has had a big impact on my faith formation.</p>
<p>I am thankful for those men and women of the Church who have mentored me, befriended me, taught me, and walked with me through very dark times over my lifetime—my grandmother, [list of nine names] and countless others. And to St Teresa of Jesus, St John of the Cross, Teilhard de Chardin and the theologians who have fed and strengthened my spirit. God has never left me bereft for long! I am grateful for my 9 years as a Carmelite nun. Those years made me the woman of faith I am and gave me my voice. Equally, I am glad I left—to continue to marvel at the overwhelming mystery of this infinite God of ours as discovered in my soul, in everyday people, in the wonder of animals and plants, and the beauty of the universe. However, I have to say that between the ages of 16 and 23, as I was seeking guidance from priests re my vocation, I was strongly sexually propositioned by three priests. Thankfully, they were unsuccessful. However, I can't emphasise enough the trauma and confusion this put me through. I began to doubt myself. What was I doing to cause this? Well, all I was doing was taking my life with God seriously and seeking to be closer to God. After the concentrated effort of the third priest I rang the bell of the Blessed sacrament Fathers in Sydney to seek advice on how to handle the priest. (Yes, I was a naive young woman!) The response of the Blessed sacrament priest who responded to my story: "You slut! I know women like you." I sit here wondering how I can describe to you the profound impact this response has had on me subsequently. I won't because I am sceptical of its reception.</p>
<p>There have been times when my faith has sustained me in some very difficult times and I know that I have been blessed in my life and have a set of principles to guide me through life. There have also been some very difficult times when I was out of step with the teachings of my religion. This was particularly so when the same sex marriage debate was on. Our son is gay and I was taken aback by the vitriol he received and also quite frankly the very conservative and dismissive comments from my own fellow parishioners. I felt very disconnected but the one thing that kept me going was God's love and help. I asked myself what God would feel about [ - ]? I found it hard to believe that my God would discriminate and be intolerant. A God whom I believe to be loving and inclusive.</p>
<p>I am encouraged by the Church and have found a home there but I see young people struggling to believe in the Church.</p>
<p>Many of the women participating shared strong faith stories but expressed the feeling of being second class in the Church. Many of the men recognised women as the pillars of the Church who are the glue holding everything together, yet unheard, unrecognised and unappreciated by the hierarchy.</p>
<p>I am a child abuse survivor, one of many, of [ - ], once curate at [ - ] circa [ - ]. My name is [ - ]. You can look up my statement to the Royal Commission and the documents from my suit against the</p>

<p>Church. I have embraced the more open Christianity of Anglicanism, but my beliefs have moved to broader inclusion of the people and work of our Creator. Catholicism seems to have been all about exclusion, exclusivities and power/authority/aristocracy/empire: princes of the Church? Pontifex? Jesus wept! What were you thinking! Abandon the lust for power. Engage relationship and inclusion, compassion, siblinghood of the one Father/Mother Creator.</p>
<p>Groups found this the hardest to do in a group situation but their experiences were: Cultural diversity of priests in congregations leads to difficulties in connectivity. Harder to get young adults to Church Connections at high schools harder due to kids coming from different parishes. Young people refusing to do the readings at church, Altar servers. Less people go to church now, more than ever. Church vs society, life events. Youth find church boring, irrelevant. Experience—we all have some connections to people who are experiencing the above challenges and difficulties within their personal faith journey.</p>
<p>My observation is that many people don't seem to take reception of the Eucharist seriously. I am also well aware that many Catholics are lukewarm when it comes to believing in the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist (due to poor catechesis, poor preaching). I decided to ask my local priest about the possibility of reminding the congregation about being properly disposed to receive Holy Communion. His reply astounded me, "I cannot upset people's feelings". I retorted that he was not simply handing out candy to children and that receiving the Eucharist in a state of mortal sin is very serious. He was not moved. So, apparently, this priest is far more concerned with his own image and popularity rather than the fate of the souls in his care. This contravenes his duty of care and his vows. This is effeminacy at work. It is an endemic problem throughout the Church and its effects have/are/will be catastrophic for a multitude of souls. The Church's members, starting with priests and bishops, need to stop being politically correct and fearful and instead, preach with authority.</p>
<p>Watching Australian Catholics ignore or leave behind their rich inheritance of Christianity has moved me to create an echo-chamber that can help magnify the message of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit has taught me that the work of my career has been a training ground for the real work He has set before me.</p>
<p>The post-conciliar liturgy of the Church formed my spirituality as a priest and provided spiritual nourishment for me. The new translation of the Roman Missal has stopped this source of nourishment. Bit by bit, I have found the courage to change the wording so that I can understand the prayers and thus communicate them better to my people. I have been offended by the nasty way the earlier translation was mocked and the totalitarian way the new pompous fake sacred was imposed. I am disillusioned with the liturgy and the way the Church did this. It reveals a spirit far from the Gospel. It is an example of SPIRITUAL ABUSE.</p>
<p>Although I have been a Catholic all my life, I only came back into my faith 4 years ago. I learnt a great deal about Jesus by going to Mass each day from the gospel passages but knew little about what constituted mortal sin. This I learned only partly from the Mass, the rest I learnt from elsewhere, which is why I state that the Church needs to teach again the basics of the 'truth' so that we may live in God's favour and not condemn our souls.</p>
<p>If it wasn't for my faith, I would have given up many years ago, I enjoy going to Mass and meeting everyone in our parish, my faith is very important to me</p>
<p>I was deeply blessed to have a wonderful Catholic education at a Convent and attend very nurturing churches, as a child and a teenager, in the UK. After that my experience of the Catholic Church varied. Thanks be to God, I am now much stronger in my faith and in my love of our Church. Sadly, my son has not been so blessed. Despite sending him to Catholic Primary and High schools here in [ - ], the faith formation and religious education was on the whole very poor. Many of the teachers were either non-Catholic, non-practising Catholics or practicing Catholics with very little passion for their Faith. This of course had a negative impact on him and his peers. Whilst, as in my childhood, there was a great respect and consideration given to non-Catholic students, there is now the problem of political correctness which has gained far too much power and influence. Also, it was very hard trying to find priests who could relate to teenagers and young adults. Very sadly, despite</p>

<p>all my influence, spiritual nurturing and prayers, my son has given up on the Church. This MUST change for their sakes and the sake of the future of our Church. I recommend more teachers and young adults as well as the wider Catholic community, including the clergy, be encouraged to attend a "Life in The Spirit Seminar" at least once in their life. From my own personal experience and the experience of my fellow participants, it is a wonderful, inspirational and outstanding treasure for all who feel lead to do it. They just need to hear more about it.</p>
<p>My conversations with the male Catholic clergy that I know leaves me unhopeful about positive and proactive change; I fear that they would prefer to preside over and control the unfolding disaster and will not be able to or willing to honestly and openly welcome the laity and women as their equals in the Australian Church with the right and responsibility to lead the Church at every level into the future.</p>
<p>My best experience of the Church was having a great priest. I could actually understand him (no thick accent), he was up to date on the latest trends and could engage with all parishioners no matter their age.</p>
<p>Born and brought up in India till age 25, I was fortunate to have the faith lived and shared by my parents, diocesan priests, the Christian Brothers and many other religious groups. Faith was truly passed on and it was an attractive gift that we sought and protected. In my parish in [ - ] WA, the parish fabric is largely multicultural. We have a strong, vibrant and committed faith community.</p>
<p>I started attending the traditional Latin Mass when it was available and it was the best experience of my life, we need this to be in every diocese and we should promote tradition rather than modernism.</p>
<p>Still a faith-filled Catholic. Feel most welcome at my new parish (have recently moved back to [ - ] after retiring from a Catholic school in the country). Raised in a Catholic family (open and thoughtful even though the 50's and 60's) attended Catholic boarding school for secondary education, after tertiary education joined Catholic Ed and loved being a teacher and then leader. Raised 3 children as a single parent, none of whom are practising. But interestingly my granddaughter has begun school in Melbourne at a Catholic Primary school in spite of having 'atheistic' or almost 'atheistic ' parents according to my daughter. Always have considered I/we are the Church, not the clergy alone. Have many friends in ordained ministry—know many are suffering with the Royal Commission findings and I think most Catholics especially with recent conviction of Cardinal Pell are distressed even traumatised.</p>
<p>Making the sacraments as a child are wonderful memories. The provisions of the Eucharist and Blessed Sacrament have allowed me to continue to deepen my faith and my relationship with Jesus, and with the Holy Trinity. Equally, I have felt traumatised by the sexual abuse of minors by Church Clergy and cannot bear for my Church to continue on the same path that led it to this point of abuse to the victims and to the Church itself. I feel ready to help our Church change, to assist the continuity of the sacraments for its people in a new and safer way, to love our people so that Christ is only stronger for the weight of the cross we all bare. My faith has led me to declare openly my love for Christ and my desire to serve him and his people, and that has not diminished.</p>
<p>I have been fortunate to have met many wonderful people in our Church throughout the years both at home in Australia and abroad. I am a faithful disciple of Christ come what may and know many others who could be described like that. Belonging to a parish where the priest is sufficiently pastoral to really develop the faith education of adults is nothing short of revelatory and exhilarating. A community is vital for the faith to grow and for the sharing of the faith. To be part of a vibrant community is what many people long for and I am delighted to say that I have been part of a community like that. The priest was a kind man who was active and deeply interested in what we thought and what we wanted. He modelled Christ in our community and challenged us to follow his lead ... yet he always walked beside us. Our Church is always stronger when lay people are inspired to invest themselves and make sacrifices for others both within and without the community of faith.</p>
<p>I chose to become a Catholic when I was 18 because my experience at a Catholic school and in a local parish brought me into contact with people who were dedicated to living the gospel message.</p>

Formation in the Young Christian Students movement reinforced my passion for the Church as an organization committed to changing the world. I married a man who shared my passion for social justice and the Church and we had four children. We have spent our lives sharing the Christian message of love and compassion, building small Christian Communities reaching out and responding to the needs of the poor in Australian society and overseas. I have been a teacher in Catholic secondary schools for over 40 years. I find myself despairing at a religious curriculum which focuses on Church structures and rituals rather than the message of Jesus for our world. I work with students who are enthusiastic participants in Retreats and programs which engage them in serving others. They are very open to the gospel message of compassion, meaningful experiences of prayer and reflection and often deeply spiritual. Despite this, their Involvement in the life of the Church is limited and mostly their attitude is one of apathy rather than animosity. As much as we try to encourage their involvement, they mostly see it as irrelevant to their lives and out of touch with their world. This deeply saddens me because to live the gospel vision a person needs to be in community with others.

I migrated from India at the age of thirty. I was shocked and still am, by the lack of reverence people have for the Eucharist by the way they dress and their body language. There is a lack of support for families, and many families are losing their children after the age of twelve. Catholic schools are not really Catholic in Australia, less than 5% of parents practiced in our kids' schools. Moreover, there is not that warmth, people need to learn how to become friends and care for each other and their children.

I have been fortunate to receive both my Primary and Secondary education in Catholic schools, before joining the Marist Brothers, and later in life, discerning my vocation as a married man and father. I am proud to be a 32-year-old Catholic whose identity, faith and experience of Church has been overwhelmingly diverse, uplifting and life-giving; bringing me to concretely experience God's kingdom through the sacraments, the parish, and my current ministry in Catholic education. From these experiences, I feel a sense of service and stewardship to our people, to pass on the faith to my own daughter both in the 'domestic Church' of our home, and the wider Church. I continued to be shaped and formed by wonderful priests, married couples and religious. My great hope is that these experiences can be grown, developed and strengthened as we renew ourselves as a Church, and reclaim our identity as followers of Jesus in a world that asks us to be radically different.

I am fortunate to have had experienced a good Catholic upbringing. Attending a Brothers school, I never experienced any abuse. However, with all the issues around priests recently and the lack of action from the Church, I am starting to doubt!!!

I came to God and the Church as an adult, and was baptized by a priest who did not place any barriers in the way for me to be accepted in the Church. It took a fair few years for me to really feel that I was part of the Church, as in, we are all "The Church". Whereas I think people outside the Church see "The Church" as being more the Church hierarchy. We as laypeople need to take ownership of the Church and take up our cross and carry the responsibility of promoting the Church, especially in these tough times for the Church.

Years ago, I went to a student conference "First seek the kingdom" in which we looked at our current reality, Jesus' approach to his own time, and our approach to building the kingdom. It was exciting to be part of a shared reflective experience that connected our shared reality, our encounter with Jesus, and our shared challenge to enter the world and embrace what Jesus is asking of us. It led me to a specialisation in Aboriginal health, and later a strong urge to advocate for children. This was all strengthened with a trip to Filipino Christian communities and with communities back in [ - ]. In more recent years retreats using contemplative practices, the readings of Fr Richard Rohr and the community building of Parker Palmer have all helped me. I have recently re connected to a local parish but I struggle as it is so narrow and conservative. It hasn't really changed since my childhood. I hear about God's love but rarely. It mostly feels like God's judgement. Thank goodness I've received some broader adult faith formation and community beyond the parish. How can we build

<p>connections with the broader community that are real? How can we build faith formation that is not just a rote learning of the catechism?</p>
<p>I am currently an Acolyte in [ - ] and attend daily Mass and still struggle to fully understand all aspects of our rich Catholic Tradition.</p>
<p>Despite myself and my own set plans, my Lord Jesus Christ took me by the hand and brought me back into the Church after I had experienced much confusion in my childhood and teens (including through the Catholic school system) about what and where was the Truth. It was the last thing I expected, and entirely Christ-led. He led me back to Himself, to the sacraments, and to the Holy Eucharist. It was through his power that I am a Catholic. The greatest stumbling block regarding the Church is that so much damage has been done to her in the process of trying to modernise her and change her. All I could see was a weakened, watered-down institution and liturgy that was unattractive, somewhat irrelevant and desperate to appeal to the modern world. It was off-putting, and it was only through the power of God that I was led back into it, when I discovered, with difficulty, and through many convoluted layers and hurdles, that the fullness of the Truth really is in the Catholic Church. Inconceivable damage is being done to the Holy Church through attempts to 'make the liturgy more relevant and appealing' and to 'be attractive to the modern world.' The only way that the liturgy can be more appealing is to return to the beautiful traditions of Holy Mother Church, her sacred and reverent liturgy and music, and instil a sense of awe and wonder in the Church again of being in the real presence of Christ the King. This most certainly will not be by conforming in any way to our current secular culture around us. As I learn more and more about the history of the Church and our faith, it breaks my heart to see what has happened to the glorious Church and her sacred liturgy. The minimalist Church buildings, the attempts to modernise ... they are so misguided and lacking wisdom. It's time now in this Council to return to courage and real leadership, a time to be uncompromising and to stand up and loudly proclaim the truth; loudly proclaim the Gospel in all its glory, and to be unapologetic for this. Political correctness should have no part in our Church, as it is an instrument of the Marxist Revolution. The truth and the truth only should hold sway, and if this produces martyrs, so be it. The Church was built on the blood of martyrs and that is what gave her the strength she once possessed. Where is that courage now? The Catholic schools, parishes, organisations—all need sweeping changes to root out the lethargy, the conformity to the world, the blatant heresies (particularly all throughout the Catholic school system), the apologetic attitude to preaching and teaching the truth, and the cowardice. As St Paul was fond of saying, and indeed our Lord himself, there will be no cowards in the Kingdom of Heaven. In this Council, please return to Christ and to our great teachings and traditions. Our lives are all depending on it.</p>
<p>I found that at my first Mass was I attended at the [ - ] church in [ - ] took me by surprise as I entered the church through one of the side entrances and sat with my wife and two young children in one of the side wings of the church towards the back of the church and was quite surprised to find mostly young adults sitting around us talking and joking while Mass was going on and to me this was a sacrilege as I had just come from India, where, no one spoke while Mass was going on. Fortunately, we shifted house and then going to the [ - ] church in [ - ] where we found the situation was much more solemn.</p>
<p>My experience of faith which has shaped me has come from my mother. Home is where the faith is, germinating and spreading in love! My husband's faith however was shaped firstly at home then being challenged and seeking an answer from a trusted Catholic apologetics source (Catholic.com and EWTN).</p>
<p>I am a teacher in a Catholic school. I have experienced racism and racial bigotry from so-called Catholics. Catholic Education has been infiltrated by white supremacists who are not actually Catholics. Far too many Catholic school leaders are mercenaries who convert to advance their careers. This has to stop. It will destroy the Church.</p>
<p>I am 50 years old. I've been brought up in a Catholic family as a Catholic. I have been involved in many Church groups and been to many Christian events that had 'changed my life'. I have seen many</p>

wondrous things around the world and seen and experienced many things that had 'changed my life'. I have always felt deeply in my heart to have Jesus in the centre of my life but forever pursuing this lifelong goal had tired me out. I now feel I should pray but I don't know what to pray for or have nothing to pray for. I had just recently started on putting together daily journals containing Feast Days, Saints, and daily Mass readings hoping that one day this will get me right back on track.

Seeing growing numbers of people at weekday Masses and adoration is very impressive.

I have been brought up as a Catholic my whole life, went to Catholic school and sent my children to a Catholic school. But a once in a life time opportunity came up for my eldest daughter to go to an academically selective public high school. It was a big decision to pull her out of the Catholic system and not have the supportive religious pastoral care at school. I realised then that I had to set an example for her if I was going to engage her in coming to church with me. It all started with me being a reader and helping out organising the readers on a Sunday Mass. Then my 13-year-old daughter became involved by being a reader as well and now she is very involved in many parish and youth activities. I believe she is more involved in parish life now compared to if she had stayed in a Catholic school. It's because as a parent I've had to make more of an effort to set an example to my children so they involve themselves in the celebration of the Eucharist and that it becomes more meaningful to them. Consequently, my children are also now keen to join the youth group and choir.

I am proud to say I was very well educated by the Mercy Sisters and the Christian Brothers, 99% of whom were very committed and dedicated to their role—they were great role models, in faith and actions, and were responsible for effectively educating thousands of today's community leaders and they knew how to build and develop the faith and morals of their students.

I have always considered my Faith to be a simple Faith—a Gift from God, and as such I have never questioned energetically what it was all about. What I have found over the last several years is a disappointment with the Church, and hence a willingness to question whether it was suitable to continue to believe in the way that I had previously. The Child Sexual Abuse Scandal has rocked many of us to the core. I used to believe that the Hierarchy of the Church was important, and stood for something. I don't believe that any more. My prayer, reading and questioning, and listening to the Holy Spirit, have guided my Faith in a different direction. I am now so convinced that we as members of the Church need to stand up and be counted, and to ask that Christ become the important centre of our belief, faith and Church. My relationship now is with God, Jesus, and the teachings of the Gospels, because that is where the guidance comes for my daily faith and life journey. One thing that I really hope for during this Plenary Council process is that those making the decisions about where we are heading as Catholics into the future—(ultimately the bishops)—understand how angry, hurt and sad we are with where the Church is at today. We don't want platitudes, empty promises and refusal to act. My words are impassioned and may not seem to be very specific or constructive. This is because I feel we are way beyond just needing to dot the i's and cross the t's. We need a change of mindset. We need an upheaval. We need Christ and HIS teachings back in our Church. Not conservatism and rigidity. My Faith has grown through this turmoil. I hope that it is not destroyed.

Born in [ - ] 5th generation Australian. My father Catholic but non-practising after return from the War in Port Moresby. He always made the sign of the Cross and said Grace before meals. Not going to a Catholic school, I noticed that I never saw anyone doing this. My non-Catholic Mother wouldn't allow me to make my First Holy Communion, as she said that they couldn't afford a dress. When I travelled to [ - ] for High school, I needed a White dress, and as I helped with the sewing, all that I could think of was that I could now make my First Holy Communion. From the public school, Catholic children were allowed to attend a Mission for the one week at the Catholic church adjacent. I don't know what the Redemptorist priest said but I have a paper slip which I had written 5th Class. From then on I knew where I belonged and that Our Lady of Perpetual Succour was looking after me. I joined the C.Y. O. and was selected for a 3 Act Play, and continued acting and Musical Reviews, which were a thing in the late 50's early 60s. I entered the Convent in [ - ] for a few years but (although I wasn't aware it was Laity) but my evangelising lay elsewhere. I travelled to [ - ] and a few

<p>years before my husband died at [ - ] yrs leaving me with my son [age] and daughter [ - ] yrs, I had already started Formation as a Lay Dominican. I was Professed before he died, and although he was non-Catholic, he was a Christian and was never worried about how I would cope, as I belonged to this "Other Family". I was working at a Catholic Primary school as the Bursar and at the same time, became more heavily involved after my Final Profession as a Lay Dominican. Being part of the Laity in what used to be one of the Third Orders now for [ - ] yrs has been an extra layer on my journey, as Study is what we Dominicans do. I became [position] for the [large geographical region] and then I represented [this region] at the International Level. I gave up after [ - ] yrs as I have run out of money, a thing that we Laity have to work with. I am finding lately that young men are contacting me wanting to Study to become Lay Dominicans. At almost [ - ] yrs of age, I thank God that I have been able to continue for the [ - ] yrs. Living alone makes it a lot easier to pray when I want and recharge my batteries, and then off again. In [month &amp; year], I was the Lay Delegate to go to [overseas] for the Closing Mass of our [ - ] year Jubilee and Pope Francis was asked to say Mass at St. John Lateran and not the Vatican, as that was where St. Dominic was given the Bull to commence the Order of Preachers or Dominicans as we are called. Our Lay International Council is made up of one from each Continent and we met once a year (those fares were paid thank God). We met in [a number of locations], it should have been [ - ] next but Visas for some are too hard to obtain so our Promoter General held it in our Headquarters, [ - ]. I help establish Fraternities in [overseas countries], etc.</p>
<p>My experience of the Church in Australia is there is a sharp division between those who identify as "liberals" and those who identify as "conservatives". There are those that seek radical change and those that are resistant to it. The reality is that there is really only one way that is Jesus Christ (John 14:6). Orthodoxy walks the line between the 2 while maintaining the authenticity and beauty of the deposit faith as it has been passed down through the Church. Faith formation is key which is largely ignored or opposed by the laity and even the clergy.</p>
<p>I have always had better, more meaningful and fulfilling experiences of my faith when I have been involved in charismatic communities.</p>
<p>The Renewal of Faith program in our local parish 35 yrs ago changed my life at the time and helped me become a committed Catholic. I was brought up in the Church and from a good Catholic family but did not understand and needed more adult input. Also a committed priest (Fr [ - ] deceased) was a great help with his clarity of sin and his extended informative guide to confession.</p>
<p>I belonged to a Catholic charismatic community for 13 years and was the first time I experienced real community within the Church. People need to feel this in their parishes - we were created to live in community.</p>
<p>My experience of listening to a series of Catechesis as a youth which instructed me about the Catholic Faith was fundamental and instrumental to my faith remaining strong in my adult years.</p>
<p>I think I covered that in #1, but everything changed for me when I met Jesus in the Eucharist. All else does not matter.</p>
<p>I gained a lot of my faith from my family influence and then in my very active parish community when I was growing up. It's very different now and I think a lot of families rely too much on the faith being taught to their kids at school when it should be mostly from them at home. I was involved in many ministries in my past parish when also helped form me, then the circle of good Catholic young adults around me in my twenties which I am so grateful that I had.</p>
<p>I was taught a little bit of religion as a child and the love of God is still with me. The Church to me is God, Jesus, Mary and the Trinity, this inspires forgiveness and peace, love and understanding. Without the Church I would be lost. I respect and priests and religious, but believe their role is to help us genuinely encounter God, Jesus, Mary and the Trinity. I cannot understand how a priest who abused children can stand at the altar can consecrate the Eucharist.</p>
<p>I was instilled with the faith from a young age, surrounded by orthodox priests, and solid Catholic teaching, which was nurtured, so to develop a personal sense of prayer and faith since childhood. At university I was confronted with secularism and a strong anti-Catholic climate, which I was not</p>

phased about, due to my deep sense of logic, and reason taught to me and found in the Church's teachings, on a mental, scientific and humanitarian level thanks to my parent's devoted years of teaching. I am the youngest of four children, and my parent's home-schooled us for the majority of all our formative years. Ranging from 23–30 years of age, we are all still practicing our faith passionately, marrying Catholic spouses and teaching devotion and faith to our children—the next generation. This was not the case for many of my Catholic peers at university, who were taught at Catholic schools. The majority of them turned agnostic, atheist, or stopped attending Mass. My siblings and I firmly believe it is through this alternative form of education that all four of us are still eager to be Catholic and live out the commandments faithfully, as my parents grew aware of the decline of the faith education within the schools and commenced home-schooling 22 years ago. Now as a young adult, I find my faith best thrives when attending reconciliation at least once a month, Mass at least once a week, and weekly Holy Hour. I am a Catholic single and wish for a relationship with Christ and this cannot be obtained without devoting time to Him, like any relationship requires. Furthermore, while I personally sought out an orthodox, Novus Ordo Mass, on a recent trip to [ - ], where half my family live, I attended the Latin Mass several times, and was heartened to see the faith so vibrant, with most of the congregation under 50 years of age. Since returning to my city, I have decided to attend the Latin Mass more often, as I find it provides a far stronger sense of solemnity and teaching to the faith, which I am sorting to counter the modern secular culture.

I am a migrant myself and came to Australia in 1987 when I was in my mid-twenties. As I belonged to the minority group from my Country it was my Mothers and My faith and Prayers to Jesus, Mary and all the Saints which saved us and our relatives from being killed during the riots. In addition to many other Miracles which has happened in my life, marriage, Birth of My Children, etc., the one Miracle which I will never forget witnessing the death of my mother in the presence of my Wife at [ - ] Hospital. My mother's prayer in Tamil Language: Mocha Rakiniyae Naan Ungal Idathil Serumvalavum Enaey Kaividatheyum Theva Thayarae. Direct Translation in English: Mocha (Heaven) Rakiniyae (Queen) Naan (I) Ungal (Your) Idathil (Place) Seruvalvum (Reach, Come, Go To) Enaiy (Me) Kaividatheyum (don't forsake, Forget) Theva Thayarae (Mother Of God). English Translation: Queen Of Heaven, Until I Come To You, Please Don't Forget Me, My Mother Of God. This is the prayer of my dearest Mother ... name withheld but would be supplied if required ([date-date]). This is the Prayer my Mum used to recite whenever she thought of GOD, which was from every half an hour to an Hour every day. The Rosary was her favourite part of her devotion to GOD. From the time I was born, I remember her reciting the Rosary, after finishing off her hard day's work by cooking for the whole family of six kids and my Dad. At the age of 92, when she was given morphine to ease the pain as she was bleeding through the intestines, she went in to a deep sleep, like a coma and [I] was told by the Doctors she would pass away that night at [ - ]. As night came, I told my brother that I would spend the night with her along with my wife. My dearest Brother, who was also a qualified Nurse and who looked after my mother in his house till the age of 91, thought that she would survive the night, feeling very tired opted to go Home with his family with great difficulty. I spent the night with my wife in a special room at the [ - ] Hospital reciting prayers. As my Mother has not seen me from the [day before]. My only wish was my mother to open her eyes and look at me before she passed away that night. When I was going thru my wife's Bible I came across a prayer to Jesus (which my wife has picked from the ground at [ - ]. It had fallen near her feet blown by the wind). This prayer stated that any person who recites it continuously until he/she really believed totally in the prayer and that Jesus would offer that person whatever he/she has asked while reciting it. I said this prayer over and over until I really believed in it and then started saying the Rosary which my mum really loved ... continued with the attached document 1.

Am a 7th generation Australian of Irish/Scottish origin and grew up experiencing a strong Catholic community, convent boarding school, YCW participation, choirs, liturgies and provided significant financial contributions to parish and Church charities. Home visits by clergy entailed bringing out the napkins, best crockery, etc., a special occasion, a familiar picture of Catholic life in 50's to 90's. Am married to a Catholic and we are parents of four wonderful adult children and five grandchildren.

Have participated on school boards, P&F's, parish and charity finances and now parish affairs. Faith and spiritual life was special. Change and awareness that there were serious problems in our Church developed particularly in the 1990's when a group of former students from Christian Brothers' orphanages attempted to bring a class action against the State Government and Christian Brothers. This action was unsuccessful due to expiry of time. These brave men, (one known to me), were ridiculed and denied by the Press, Church officials and many parishioners. Tragically, this incident was to be for me, a forerunner to what has been a major cover-up and possibly insurmountable scandal for my Church. I became deeply concerned that official responses were not fair, indeed very very wrong. Since then, despite continuing to attend our local parish church, a deep concern continues and that nothing much has changed. Our church uses weasel words such as 'our prayers and thoughts are with you' towards the victims. This is not good enough. We, particularly Catholic women, are regarded poorly or ignored when questioning what is going on with women's roles, Church finances, etc. We feel we are marked as showing a lack of faith. As a woman, despite being secure in my 'Australian-ness', I feel I am only a part-participant in my Church, my labour and money are at times of more import to the Church than my spiritual life. Women I talk with from regional and interstate parishes are holding the similar views. This saddens me as we have such wonderful opportunities to share our Catholic faith in Australia, but keep banging our heads on an insurmountable wall.

I have been blessed to have had wonderful family members and in particular my mother, grandfather and aunt help me grow in my faith. I was in both Catholic and State primary and secondary schools. I had a few wonderful Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition in a few years of primary school and 3 years in secondary school that gave me some wonderful faith experiences also. I had good, solid, prayerful parish priests who were forthright in proclaiming the truth of the Gospel and not scared to give us a challenge or two when it was needed. I was questioned about my Catholic 'dormant' faith in my early twenties by a Pentecostal friend. This had me scour many books and resources to find out the beauty and truth of my Catholic faith. Am I ever grateful! This had me hunger and thirst for the Truth. I joined the Benedictine community at [ - ] as an oblate. I joined the Marian Movement for priests, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Bible studies... to grow deeper in my faith and love walk with our Lord. The Lord then led me to experience the ultimate, the climax of my existence. The knowledge of the Divine Will as revealed to Luisa Piccarreta. This then truly 'revolutionalised' my life in deeper and newer ways and still is. The joy, love and peace is beyond phenomenal. I know that the revelations given to Luisa will renew the Church and the face of the earth. I would LOVE to think that the Holy Spirit will start this AWESOME work in His 'South Land' of Australia, New Zealand and other islands in the Pacific. This has been prophesied 412 years ago by Pedro Fernandez de Quiros. I am so excited, that what we as Christians, who have been praying this prayer for 2000 years, i.e. "Thy Kingdom Come. Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven" will be REALISED. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. This is His Era. This new millennium has been consecrated by St John Paul II to His Spouse, The Blessed Virgin Mary. Through Mama's intercession, the Holy Spirit will renew the Church and the face of the earth. Just as Mama interceded at Cana, She is interceding for us now. I do however believe it is going to get uglier and more challenging BEFORE this glorious new dawn/age.

The experience that shaped me the most, was when I was asked to attend a Life in the Spirit Seminar (at the time I did not know about the Charismatic Renewal who ran the Seminar) I had been away from the Church for many years when I was asked by a friend to attend. During this time, I went to reconciliation. Surrendered my life to the Lord and experienced baptism in the Holy Spirit. It changed my life. Immediately my relationship with the Lord became so real and alive. Since then (25yrs), I have been involved with running these Seminars and have seen hundreds of people having this experience and the result is a desire to serve the Lord in the Church and encourage others to experience the same. It turned me into a nominal Catholic to an authentic one.

I believe firmly that you get out of life what you put in. You cannot expect to sit there and have things handed to you on a plate. For that reason, I have taken an active part in our parish life and

community. I chair the parish pastoral council, am a reader, special minister and acolyte. I am a safeguarding officer, and have played an active role in our parish plenary council meetings. My faith is hugely important to me, but I want to use it to serve others, rather than just me personally.

I myself go to church and get inspired by the readings and homilies. The other parts of Mass are like a formality that must be done and I do understand its purpose. However, I feel most people fail to understand it all. I fell away from the Church in the 1990's when all this scandal was starting to emerge in Ireland. My faith in the Church was truly tested and those years away were dark and difficult times for me. But I came back especially since I migrated to Australia 10 yrs ago. Although I am very sad of these most recent events (Pell) my faith is very strong but it is something I done myself not necessarily with the help of the Church.

GOD is very good to me and he is always forever challenging me to change, better myself, take chances, be uncomfortable. To learn from mistakes and use those times of hurt, disappointment as a launching pad to excel higher and higher. Although never easy, GOD does reward me and showers blessings on me in ways I could never imagine. Therefore, I say to the Church don't be afraid, GOD wants and needs us/Church to change. Yes, it will be hard but GOD asks us to have faith and push on, and GOD will reward us all.

My submission is based on my lifetime of work with the Cardijn-inspired movements beginning with the YCW, working in particular with young unemployed people, later with young factory workers in Asia as well as refugees living in jungle camps. In this context, the story of the Argentinian lay YCW mentor, Pepe Palacio, who was "disappeared" by the military at the end of 1975, was a key formative event. Returning to Australia, I have been dismayed to find the Church so often still aligned with the rich. I knew a Filipino priest who fought against an Australian mining company that had destroyed the fishing grounds of his parishioners. In turn, he was denounced as a communist by agents of the company, placing his life in danger. Later I discovered that the CEO of the company had studied at CBC St Kilda. Similarly, I read of Catholic CEOs of major companies who sought to combat the work of the unions yet who played a prominent role in Catholic charitable works. More recently, I read a report that the lay director of a major Catholic educational establishment was or is on a salary of \$1.25 million. How does this represent the Church of the Poor that is or is meant to be one of the key legacies of Vatican II?

I grew up in working-class Scotland in the fifties. Most parishioners were of Irish heritage having left Ireland seeking work to survive in mid-19th century. The church was our spiritual and social place. We were conscious on many levels of being 'different' from the general population. I married a person who was not a Catholic. This was not the rift-causing stigma that it had been in previous generations. Our children were Baptised in the Catholic Church. My husband became a Catholic before we came to Australia, but because he had wanted "what you have" and didn't experience whatever 'that' is, his faith foundered, lapsed and has never returned. Our children have not kept the faith either. I eventually found my faith community at the Redemptorist Monastery. I am sustained spiritually by the Redemptorists' learned insights, simple, spiritual inclusivity and effective oration. They emphasise God's love for all. My practice is rounded out by Christian Meditation (as taught by John Main) and Non-Violent Communication (as taught by Marshall Rosenberg). I believe all priests should be skilled in NVC especially for the sacrament of Reconciliation. I love the 2nd Rite and have not visited a confessional box for many years.

I grew up in the Catholic Church and regularly attended Mass with my family, went to a Catholic school and tried to follow the rules of the Church. My family joined a community when I was young which offered a post baptismal program of faith formation. This changed our family's experience of church. It was no longer just a place we went on Sundays, and prayers we said when needed. The church became a place where we could also connect to God and other Christians all looking for the same thing. With catechists to guide us in our journey, provide council and advice, offer catechesis and talks on particular topics of relevance and speak the truth about society and the evils faced, I was able to grow in understanding and faith. In spite of this there was a time when I rebelled in my late teen years and left the Church. I came back to my community a couple of years later because I

knew in my heart there was a truth and joy that the Church offered through my community that I couldn't find elsewhere in the world or the broader Church alone. This truth was the love of God and a way of life that led to true happiness. This was revealed through scripture and being able to understand the word of God; through the liturgy and feeling connected to the sacraments; through my Church community who loved and accepted me and shared their own struggles and joys; and through my catechists who always looked for me and called me back to the Church. They were like the shepherd going after the lost sheep. They provide advice, guidance, teaching and helped me find a real experience of God. This catechist team is a married couple and a priest and together they provide the various viewpoints and insights I need to continue my faith journey in line with Catholic teaching. As a result of the way my parents were taught and inspired to pass on faith to me and my siblings based on their personal faith development (not just rules), I have also got a better idea of how to pass on faith to my own children. I know that my example is worth more than Catholic schooling or church attendance. It is real faith, with real struggles and failings, but based on a true experience that is essential and genuine. Kids know the difference. I watched my parents' faith help them through many trials and sufferings. I have also experienced God's love when I have lived in great moments of sin. I have felt the providence of God in my marriage when my sins should have ended it, and instead He inspired and granted reconciliation and forgiveness. I experience the Holy Spirit helping me to love and accept my husband and children when being married in the modern world is challenging. I have experienced the love of my community who have helped me and understood me in times of trouble. This Church community also helps my children, especially those in their teenage years. We are close to other Christian families. The Post Confirmation Program they attend is amazing. My community is the Neocatechumenal Way.

There was a time back in 2013–2014 I went through a very deep depression. It was a time that I have the worst thoughts of my life. It was very hard to live. Crying every day, thinking of taking my own life and not being able to give the best of me to my family. The Catholic Church, the gospel, my faith in Jesus (God my beautiful father) and the Holy Spirit I have overcome the depression without any medication. It was a very difficult time in my life, but by going through this I could discover and learn much more about Jesus and the Church which is my second home. I thank God because today I am another person.

Sometimes I feel like I know more than the priests I hear in Mass. And I only had a liberal arts high school education in the US ... That could be because the priests do not properly prepare homilies and so off-the-cuff teachings are often incorrect or misleading. This could also be because there are a lot of priests from Asia who may struggle with English. This could also be because of the slack and easy curriculum in the seminary in [ - ]!!

Many people shared their stories—most were about strong faith lives and parish participation accompanied by a sense of being looked down upon as 'only lay people'.

We are blessed to have immigrated to Australia a few years ago. It has been wonderful for our children to go to Catholic schools here and for us to be a part of a church/school/faith community. But compared to their previous Anglican school abroad, sadly our children now have less exposure to Scripture (Old and New Testament) at their Catholic school and growing in their day to day quiet time and relationship with God. We pray regularly as a family and try to read the Bible together, and attend Mass regularly. But oddly, there are not many families in our school who do, once their application for a Catholic high school has been successful. Our daughter was only 11 years (birthday is in late June, so one of the youngest in her year) when she prepared for and received the sacrament of Confirmation along with her year group (Year 6). As parents we were surprised how young the children were, and we did not feel our daughter was ready to be seen as an "adult" in the Church. If she were left to her own decisions, she would hardly ever go to Mass. To her, Mass is "boring" and she doesn't understand what the priests are saying as they have such heavy African and Vietnamese accents (they are friendly priests, but they are not able to engage the youth. Our kids would far rather be entertained by TV or YouTube!). Only about 8 of her year group of 60 children go to Mass regularly that we are aware of. Fellow school parents think they have "done their bit"

supporting their child until they are confirmed. But I think the Church is making a mistake, as 12/13yr olds are not developed and mature enough to know what is good for them as far as their faith and spiritual development is concerned. Our parishes, our churches, our priests need to help and engage families and youth more, and by raising the age of Confirmation to about 16yr (similar to South Africa and UK) our children will have more time with their parents and families involved helping deepen and strengthen their roots, and water and grow. It needs to become "normal" (if not "cool!") to go to Mass and be a Christian, and it certainly doesn't help if your teenager is the only one at Mass from her year group at the age of 13yr, with almost no other high school kids at Mass at all to set an example or encourage them.

Speaking from my own experience even though the responses above were from a group. I have been a Sunday Catholic since I was born. My faith and own conversion in desiring to love God and be his humble servant happened after attending a Disciples of Jesus Summer school Evangelisation retreat run for people aged 16–35. I am now actively involved in with young adults' ministry and ministry with those older than 35.

I just love Jesus, God, Holy Mass and all the Church. I have loved it since I was a little girl.

I was born in 1923 and have experienced the pre-Vatican II Church. I became a Loreto sister in 1945. I know what it was like to live the life of a restricted Catholic woman in those times. Women were never consulted about the vision of the Church which was the vision of the bishops and priests. The Church was always right. This is why child abuse was able to thrive. I have studied the documents and the issues raised by the council. The experience of a post Vatican II Church has been a positive one for me. Sisters in the Loreto order have spread their wings and moved from teaching to other charisms such as university lecturing, mission work, chaplaincy, working with Indigenous communities as well as building schools in places of special need such as East Timor. I feel that I have been able to choose my path in life according to my personal gifts. As a teacher I always included art in my programs as I liked art and valued the educational creativity of art. After retiring from teaching, I have conducted prayer groups with women and instructed them in Lectio Divina. As the numbers of religious decline, I feel the Spirit is asking us to invent new forms of Church service like the oblates of the Good Samaritan order. This would be a new evangelisation capturing past pupils of our Catholic schools who are often divorced from the Church and have little or no contact with a Catholic parish. Mary Ward founded our order. Her motto was Freedom, Justice and Sincerity. I believe these three virtues should be adopted by an enlightened Catholic Church in the journey ahead.

A pivotal moment in my life was at about 25 years when I bought a copy of Catholic Catechism. It was instrumental in saving my Faith. My wife and I have now been married 33 years and go to Mass at least weekly. Our four adult children also practice the faith. I believe the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the most undervalued and underutilized book on earth.

For me, having a strong and active faith-life from the age of 10–18 years old was an integral part in shaping who I am today especially in the area of bringing up my children in the Catholic faith. It opened my eyes to the fact that the Catholic faith is in fact alive and not just confined to the hour at Mass. Mixing with like-minded youth in youth groups/choir helped me 'stay' in the Church which is a concerning issue as parents these days. Attending Charismatic, Youth Rallies, Youth Camps, Life In The Spirit Seminars and World Youth Day are some of my positive experiences in the faith and I will encourage my children to participate where possible.

When I was little, I only remembered participating occasionally in rosary prayers during the months of May and October. Yet the interesting thing I noticed during my own father's funeral and at all of the funerals, I had attended was that the rosary was said every night for as long as the body lay reposed at the funeral parlour. When I moved to Australia in 2002, one of the few people I met invited me to join a rosary group and it was an enriching experience.

As a gay man (something I am blessed with but did not choose), I feel God wants me to flourish in my life and relationships. The Holy Spirit and the Jesus I have come to know helped me realise this.

However, this is not the message I get from the institutional Church. I grew up feeling rejected by the Church. We are told we are 'intrinsically disordered' and language matters, whatever theological floweriness you dress it up in. Many families have rejected their children due to the Church's position on homosexuality. Some kick their children out of home and say they are on their own if they will not become normal, some try and organise therapy for the children to try and change them—both are deeply damaging. Most families' rejection due to Church teaching is more subtle—'we love you but not this part of you'. The problem is, this means they love the superficial parts of their children but not the vulnerable most intimately loving parts—they do not love the parts that can most deeply connect with another person. If this part is not loved, why does anything else matter? I have had friends brutally attacked purely on account of their sexuality. Many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people have anxiety and depression and have killed themselves, not because of their orientation but because of the stigma in society—which we all know the Church is largely (but not solely) responsible for. Many lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people love God and want to be part of a faith community but do not feel welcomed. We feel we are owed a sincere apology for the wounds caused by the Church over the centuries. The Church was wrong and has apologised about many things over the centuries, and it is time to apologise about the way it has treated us. The Church has rejected not just our sexuality, but in doing so it has rejected our hearts, the deepest ways in which we can love, and thus our very spirits. It is time to build a bridge between the lesbian gay bisexual and transgender community and the institutional Church, but to be clear the onus is on the Church to reach out first—because she has been historical oppressor and not the other way around.

I am a strong practicing Catholic, and at the start of high school (year 7) I was not afraid to tell people if they asked me. However, this has changed as I have gone through high school. I am constantly being picked on for being Catholic, while going to a Catholic school. This makes absolutely no sense to me and it tells me that something needs to change within the Church community within schools!!!!

My faith sustains me in the best and worst of times, but it was not always so. I found, especially in my teen years that I felt lost and that the Church was judging me, not welcoming me. I looked for answers. First, I went to those around me I thought could help, teachers, priests, mentors. I found myself rebuffed at every turn. No one could give me any answers, only excuses or they would evade my questions. This turned me further from my faith and I went looking for comfort and community elsewhere. Years later, I have been brought back to my faith, but only through luck of being in the right place at the right time and meeting the right people. But I still wonder how the Church could have let me be so lost when I needed it most. Why aren't there more people, leaders, priests, etc., that are willing to answer the hard questions? Are they afraid to be wrong or do they not know what to say? I don't know, but in either case our leaders are either afraid to question unlimited authority, lacking humility, or they aren't educated enough in order to help the very people they are meant to serve. I believe this is still a problem now. I am just lucky to have found the few out there who can discuss our faith openly without prejudice. I know now that no one but God can answer my big questions and guide me through my life journey. But, even then, I look for community and understanding. I hope our Church here in Australia grows in acceptance and understanding so that we may all be more open to discussion and new ideas without being defensive.

I came back to the faith through the call of Mary our Mother and her messages for the Human Race to turn back to God. I saw her in a dream and she said nothing except gave me a look of a Mother hurting at the way we have turned from God.

The governance in the Church is compromised. There are rules and guides, but avenues to question or alert when things go wrong is poor. Even when abuse is reported, it is not addressed? Do your job properly. Stop the abuse, set up a proper customer feedback system that focuses on solutions, not cover up. Ensures errors are corrected and does not allow the deluded abusers years to become complacent. I have reported abuse I have reported concerns—I have not received but criticism and more abuse. I don't think I want to recall the abuse again. Clean up your house—stop the abuse.

Hold an amnesty where you genuinely learn about any abuse in the Church. Actually, do something—even if it is awareness of the perp that what they did wasn't really that nice (minimum for emotional abuse) to counselling, training for liturgical abuse, etc. etc. etc. and get back to the victim with the action. Let them know that you listened and corrected error (work of mercy).

Get rid of the homosexuals in the priesthood, ban Catholics from being freemasons again, bring back the Latin Mass, bring back tradition. Direct parishioners how to vote in elections and have influence again in society. Stop watering down the Church doctrine to please degenerates and enemies of the Church. Bring back headscarfs and sacred silence. No women leadership as the Bible forbids it.

When my family moved in [ - ] 11 years ago, we were welcomed and supported by friendships of well-formed Catholic families. We got to be invited to attend the Family Club, which organises parenting classes, activities for kids from families who desire to raise well-formed young adults, as well as family camps and picnics. We saw very good parent role models from the group. In not few instances, these Catholic families have extended their helping hand to us in moments of need. We felt truly blessed by their loyal friendship, not shallow but truly lived and expressed in little and big ways. Most, if not all of these families we came to learn were simple, humble yet fervent and vigorous Catholics. Consequently, our friendship opened up our eyes to a greater relationship with God and a greater love for the Mother Church. It would seem to be similar to how the first Christians in the first centuries must have live. "See how they loved one another." I believe, if we could cultivate more of such family formation and venues in the Church in Australia, I'm convinced we'll be able to see new generations of well-formed kids, who love intensely Christ and the Mother Church, spilling attractive ambiance to wherever they serve and work. I believe this is the way for the Church in Australia to grow and re-Christianise Australia.

Just as a woman, I feel way more comfortable when a priest is wearing his collar. I feel like the collar creates a very clear relationship with a woman and a priest.

There are four of us in the group. Three of us are Australian (one a priest) and I (the writer) am a migrant. We come from a very traditional Catholic background where the Mass is the summit of our faith and the sacraments, praying the Rosary, adoration of the Blessed sacrament marks our Catholic identity. We belong to the Family Prayer Ministry, once known as the Family Prayer Crusade (under the Archdiocese Prayer Groups) following Fr Patrick Peyton's message "The family that prays together stays together." The Prayer Group was aimed at promoting the Rosary in schools. A Rosary booklet inspired by Sr Cabrini RSM was printed and distributed to schools. We were given the opportunity to go to some schools to speak to children preparing for the sacraments about Prayer and sharing our faith stories. Having these dialogue sessions with the children have made us realise that God is in their hearts and wisdom does come from the mouth of babes. Sharing our faith stories with them also helped them see that we may change but God never changes in his love for us, he is ever faithful and as he promised, "I will be with you till the end of time." It has also deepened our understanding of why we go to Mass, not to fulfil our Sunday obligation but to connect with God, our source of life, grace and strength. It has certainly shaped our beliefs and attitudes and we now go to Mass and pray with great joy not with fear. I will never forget how Fr [ - ], MSC (RIP) the first Australian priest that I met when I came to Australia in 1997 impacted my spiritual life when he taught me to accept the people for who they are, where they are at and for what they do. That sums up, "Being Catholic" i.e. "Be like Christ, just love and forgive!" To make God present in the lives of my children (even those who are not going to church nor meet up to my expectations), I have to love them the way God loves them, just as they are, regardless of all their faults and failures and to forgive them every time for everything. This has really helped me in my relationships with my children and as an Asian controlling parent, I am now learning to be a good listener and at the same time be an understanding and discerning parent, unafraid to stand up for what is right and correct when necessary. Jesus founded the Catholic Church, a community of God loving people who love one another. To be a Catholic is to walk in the footsteps of Christ not follow the rules of an organisation like the Pharisees and High priests whose hearts were never with the people. He chided them for their hypocrisy because they were using their power to harm the lowly. Jesus raises the

<p>lowly and casts the mighty from their thrones. Maybe these scandals will help us reflect on our own personal identity as a Catholic. I am happy and proud to be a Catholic, to be like Christ, walking in his footsteps, guided by the Holy Spirit and be part of God's family.</p>
<p>I grew up with an active faith at school initially with Jocist and later Ignatian spirituality. My experience of Church was positive. As an adult, my experience of Church has been disappointing largely due to inadequate clergy, and structures which stifle participation.</p>
<p>I have been a sacrament Coordinator for two years in our previous parish and parish school. In that stint, I saw the importance of providing venues for parents and families to encounter other good Catholic families, so that they could learn from each other and develop greater affection for sacraments. I also saw Catholic families who were not practicing and the challenges of inviting them back. Formal talks given to such families on Church and faith by itself I found to be simply ineffective. However, what I found far more effective is through friendships. Once trust and confidence are established, greater influence on those families becomes easier. As a result, I would encourage the Church in Australia to consider a greater focus in supporting families in their family life, for example uplifting parenting skills, and to provide greater venues for families to interact, get to know each other, build trust and confidence based on friendship and to care more for each other. This way, the Church would grow strengthened as more well-formed kids from these well-formed families offer their services and talents to the Mother Church and the society at large.</p>
<p>Our experiences have only been positive. Fellow parishioners have always been friendly and welcoming. Priests are happy to help wherever possible.</p>
<p>I have met friends from good families who share same aspirations to love Christ and the Church as my family. We have formed strong friendships among our group. We have regular catch-ups, for example, Friday early Masses and followed by a simple brekky at a café. Simple yet fun-filled, precious. For me, I greatly value such circle of friendship among my friends. We get to support each other during rough times; we get to celebrate together in bright times. I wish that many of the young adults would also find their circle of Catholic friends. The Church in Australia should continue more on this path, of providing greater venues for young people to meet and know better other young Catholics, as that could likely provide them with good support in their faith and their journey.</p>
<p>My Faith was shaped by my parents who were both very strong in their beliefs. They instilled in me a love of my Faith for which I am most grateful. My Faith was also shaped by the Sisters of [ - ] who taught me throughout my school years. Their commitment to their religious calling, educating me and instilling in me a value system that I have never forgotten, is something I am most grateful for. Despite everything that has happened in the Church up to now, whilst shocked, disappointed and terribly saddened, my Faith in God has not deserted me. For that I am eternally grateful. All Catholics are victims today, obviously not to the same extent that many have been, but we are still victims. I feel terribly sorry for those Clergy who have carried out their priestly duties and behaved in a manner expected of them, as they too are victims.</p>
<p>Indifferent parishes that don't bother to build community.</p>
<p>Each of the people in this group have been baptised as infants. Each member of this group has attended a Catholic school, at least till the end of high school. Each member has sent their children to Catholic Primary and Secondary schools. Two members of this group have tertiary qualifications from Catholic institutions and have worked at Catholic schools and hospitals. One has taught catechism to children after school as well as working. One works in administration in a Catholic hospital. One is trained and worked as a youth social worker. All have regularly attended Sunday Mass before and after getting married. The families have 2, 4, 9 and 10 children and many young grandchildren. But ... each of us has had a personal experience of having a faith which was unable to sustain us in the face of family and other problems. In each family, we have a number of our children who do not have faith and who look elsewhere than Christ and the Church to find support and answers to the existential problems and attacks presented increasingly in Australian's predominantly secular society. We have children who have attempted suicide, suffered and continue with severe depressions, experienced marriage breakdowns and more. How have we been able to find hope and</p>

continue? How do we find a word of hope in the face of our society's sceptical or hostile or indifferent or purely pragmatic response to life and death issues—interference in conception and fertility, tampering with the human genome, gender theory, the dismembering of the Christian family? How do we seek to know what the Catholic Christian response is to the small and monstrous events of life? Our experience has been, "if not for the Neocatechumenal Way our life would be very different". In the Church, in our parish, we have found a place where—listening to the Word of God, fed by the Eucharist and supported by a community of adults of all different ages, ethnic backgrounds, financial, educational and family circumstances—we have been able to grow in faith. This place, a post-baptismal catechumenate, with a duration of more than 30 years for our community so far, has seen the development of many charisms—10 priests, 3–4 teams of catechists at the service of bishops, parish priests and parishes in [ - ], other states of Australia and overseas, Christian families praying the Prayer of the Church and as "the Little Church" working to pass on the faith to our children, grandchildren, helping with Marriage preparation, preparation of adults and children for baptism, Post-Confirmation programmes, supporting our young adult children in attending World Youth Days to support their growth in Faith. We have received catechesis, not simply information or knowledge or qualifications, from catechists appointed by the Church which support our search to know Jesus and be open to receive his Spirit which can give hope to us and signs of hope to those who have left the Church or have never known of God or Jesus.

My experience of faith was very comfortable and mostly happy in the Church until recent years. Moving house and parish to be close to a loved one who had to be placed in nursing home care, I did not feel 'at home' in the local parish. I realise my effort to be included was not forceful but nobody encouraged me either. Over the years, I have noticed clergy are not fulfilling their 'pastoral' role as once they might have. If clergy lived in the suburbs, not attached to a house next to the church, maybe they would be become more able to administer to the needs of the people. Clergy are not reaching out to people in their parishes as once they did. People are mostly home at night time and that should be a consideration for visitation. It is no use harking back to the glory days though. With the current catastrophe the Church is in the middle of, I know I now have to return and try to be a force for change. One cannot change things from outside an organisation—which I am obviously trying to do with this submission!!

I came from parents who did not go to church. My grandparents took me to church when I stayed with them every school holidays and I loved it. When I was about 8 yrs my Dad (not a Catholic) would walk me to church about 5 km away and he would sit outside and read the newspaper and then we would walk home together. Then I started going to the Catholic school and was always involved in our Primary school parish Church activities and then my Catholic High school and Cathedral Youth Programmes. That's it. I have been on Parish Councils and our local Pastoral Committee and do many voluntary jobs in our church and [ - ] Vinnies Conference and love helping people. Although it is getting harder and harder with Vinnies as more and more people are struggling to make ends meet. Thanks for the opportunity to say something. GOD IS GOOD and WE ARE VERY BLEST TO HAVE ARCHBISHOP [ - ] and OUR PRIEST FR [ - ].

I come from a family who started with my grandparents' total faith and love of God. From there, I learned the power of Prayer and then through the faith of my Parents—my father was a convert. I married a non-Catholic who has a great faith and believes in The Eucharist as Christ's body and blood but does not feel invited to share communion with me. I however have felt very welcomed in the high Anglican cathedral when we attend. We have tried to teach our children to love and be compassionate as a Christian before denominations.

It is through my own faith, journey with God, support of the protestant groups in my work place and Bible Study Fellowship that I continued to remain steadfast and faithful to my Catholic faith. Reading the Bible, praying, sharing and holding on to God's words increased my faith.

I was brought up into a Catholic faith with strong Catholic values. The things that have strengthened my faith are daily prayer including the rosary, attending weekly Mass and adoration when able. An inspiring priest sermon can be enriching too.

<p>I attended a Catholic girls school. [School name and location]. The Nuns were strict but fair and would never let us girls be harmed in any way. My children all went to Catholic schools, and there was far too much Religion education going on. We never had it all shoved down us when I grew up here in the 70s. What happened? ... I don't know why they had to study it like a subject, and pass tests, etc ... Our religion is supposed to be about love and how to love and respect one another. But instead it's plastered over our children and shoved down them like medicine. Any wonder they lose interest and never want to go back to church. This is not how to keep the young in our parish.</p>
<p>As a man, I have been confronted for decades by celibate men who do not understand heterosexual relationships, family dynamics and basic societal interactions. When women of competence are added to any board and treated as equals—decision-making is ALWAYS better—more collaborative and generally reflective of the whole of society rather than sectional interest.</p>
<p>AS a child, I always recognised that the teachings of Jesus were the truth. But as I got older, I stopped going to Mass until my mother got me to go to confession and do a Novena with her at the Cathedral due to a number of issues I was experiencing. I then started going to church regularly and decided to throw open the doors of my heart and really focus on our Lord with awareness and trust and to not be self-conscious and that was really the beginning of the amazing journey I am on—on the road of Truth and Love and the true way to Joy with Christ knowing that I am part of a worldwide team which I call team Jesus brothers and sisters in Christ—Children of the Light.</p>
<p>Knowing that God is someone I can depend on has helped me cope with a diagnosis of MS.</p>
<p>I began my Catholic journey as although married to a Catholic and working in a Catholic school I only felt the attraction when the Mercy sisters wished me a Happy Easter with much JOY. My studies informed my faith and after a moving weekend at Marriage encounter in 1978 I became a Catholic and our family was strongly involved in parish and other activities. However, none of my children now feel committed to the Catholic faith. Reading the Christmas greetings from Church leaders I was thrilled to read Archbishop Kaye Goldworthy's comments and although Archbishop [ - ]'s was good, I was moved and could relate to Kaye's reference to pregnancy and childbirth in a totally female way. For the first time I heard the word of God opened to me in a way. I could totally and personally relate to. Now I feel called to become involved with my local Anglican parish as I can share my womanly gifts and be appreciated and acclaimed for doing more than the flowers. (In my parish, women cannot dispense the body of Christ or collect the offerings!!! Yet all lectors and special ministers are women). I have experienced great faith overseas and I am so proud of all the missionary and overseas programs the Church supports. But here in [ - ], it does NOT support me and my faith journey. I must comment the most recent Pastoral Letter of 2nd March. I thought it would be the final straw that drove me from the Church but NO, Archbishop [ - ] struck a wonderful balance and showed great empathy and support for survivors. I was about to join the many leaving but I will maintain my regular Mass attendance whilst also nourishing my woman's soul at the Anglican church.</p>
<p>I haven't got a parish to belong to, I've been prevented from entering and participating in two churches—yes two churches.</p>
<p>For me it was the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney in 2017. Our school took 10 young students from [ - ] to Sydney. We all had an amazing experience. For me, I had just lost my Pop who was a man of great faith. I felt touched by the songs, the positive vibe and the sessions that were available. It made me think that I didn't have to hide my faith, that being Catholic could be something that I can be proud and passionate and vocal about. I look forward to see if the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in [ - ] this year will deliver a similar faith experience. The Church needs events such as these.</p>
<p>I was born in [ - ] and became a convert to the Catholic Church in [year] after a direct divine encounter with Jesus Christ who saved my life. He then led me to read the Bible through which I received many revelations that were later proven accurate when I joined the Church. It was through reading the Word of God that I recognised the Catholic Church as true. I also understood the transubstantiation and the Mass. Naturally, all this changed my life from atheism, New Age</p>

occultism and dabbling deeply into Buddhism and Hinduism through which I learned Yoga of many forms which helped me to see these practices in the Church even though they had Christian names like so-called, "Christian Meditation," the Enneagram, and other forms of pagan practices even in the Mass. Sadly, all these things were brought in and taught by priests and Nuns who, because of their position, have fooled Catholics into believing these are authentically Catholic and Christianised. Today I am a formally Commissioned Catholic Evangelist with faculty to preach in the name of the Roman Catholic Church—I am an author, artist, and international speaker of note. I founded [ministry] in [year] in obedience to a prophetic vision and message from our Lord Jesus that was accepted as authentic by my Archbishop. To date, I and other members with me have preached Bible seminars, conferences, retreats, parish missions and evangelisation crusades in Portugal, England, Scotland, America, Mexico, St Lucia—Caribbean, Uganda, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and around Australia to around 22+ million people all told. In addition, we have extensive social media outreaches, weekly podcasts, an extensive YouTube channel with nearly 90 videos and [an online bible study institute]. You can imagine then, the dramatic change in my life even from hating the Church to loving it as my family whom I now serve full time without pay for the sake of the Gospel and the lost. Yes, the committed members of [ministry] have also shown dramatic growth in the Holy Spirit and the Faith as they too devote themselves to the experiential knowledge of the Word of God and the Catechism etc. This is a short story but it covers a lot of ground which I hope makes sense to you all. What changed my life can change anyone and it does.

Through stay-in retreats, day retreats, organised prayers, devotion to Our Mother Mary, attending Masses daily and weekends. Attending healing Masses conducted by the Vincentian Fathers. I am not wealthy but I am very happy contented person as I have found God and He is my life.

My experience is that I was the child of an Irish mother of steadfast Catholic faith who adhered to the basic Catholic principles of her day. Now, most of those principles seem either on the scrapheap or so discredited that they are no longer mentioned. Catholicism is now a soft religion. Believe what you think and it's OK. Do what you want, and that's OK. Near enough is good enough. Hey, if you don't like going to Mass on Sundays, then try to make it at Christmas and Easter. The C and E Catholics as we describe them where I am. But if you can't do that, then that's OK because there's no hell and no punishment. Does it matter if there's a bit of adultery? Probably not, because negatives are never mentioned any more. There are no direct old Irish-style homilies any more. Let's hold hands while we sing Kumbaya and everything will be OK. Parish priests no longer know how many lapsed Catholics they have in their parishes because there has been such a disconnect between priests and parishioners. In a previous era, the parish priest would at least annually visit every Catholic family for morning or afternoon tea. But not only that, he would also visit all the lapsed Catholics as well. He would not be there to hector or browbeat them but just to show some connection and keep in touch. Does that happen today? Not Likely!!! The parish priest is too busy putting some nice scroll lines around a notice calling for Safeguarding officers. And then he's surprised when there are no takers. And then in the operation of parishes, priests too often pander to the cliques. There's always the in crowd which makes those in the out crowd see the Church as just the same as any other body—there's insiders and outsiders and if you are not an insider then you are not accorded the same treatment as an insider. Priests and the hierarchy are so insensitive. Take Mother's Day and Father's day. Over the years the Church has decided it had to come on board with the great commercial enterprises which both these are and which have nothing in common with Catholicism or Christianity. But having decided to come on board, what do priests do on these days?? They actually ask ALL the mothers on Mother's day to stand up and on Father's day all the fathers to stand up. So that immediately discriminates against those who are not mothers and not fathers. Imagine how it feels in a church to be identified by a priest as a person who cannot have a child or does not have a child or is barren. Wow!! When priests can't see how unempathetic and discriminatory that is that, then they are really beyond help in knowing how to deal with people. Unfortunately, that's Catholic priests today. Out of touch, out of sight and out of the minds of

<p>Catholics generally because they have chose to be invisible and because they are overall ineffectual in carrying out their responsibilities and duties. It is not up to parishioners to save the day.</p>
<p>5. Formation for priesthood Explore the possibility of small group living for Seminarians so that they are aware of the reality of daily living of the people they will serve in their ministry, with classes each day at a Catholic University and perhaps they might have a part time job like other students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spiritual Formation and Adult Faith Education</li> <li>• Initial and ongoing psychological and spiritual direction throughout the years.</li> <li>• Yearly retreats: a 30-days Ignatian Retreat once in their Formation Years.</li> <li>• Formation for leadership and the art and skill of mature interpersonal relationships and communication.</li> <li>• All required to continue Spiritual/Faith Education every couple of years and throughout their priestly life.</li> </ul>
<p>6. The Eucharist/Liturgy Evolution—the New Universe Story—the Christian Story and the “Kingdom/Realm of God” are the realities in which we are living today. (Please do not use Genesis’ Creation Story again (Ref. “Field of Compassion”, Judy Cannato.) Readings at Mass need to be chosen to increase people’s awareness of the God of Love-Unity-Community (the Trinity shared with us—in us—the People of God—so that Thanksgiving-Hope/ response in love, become the essence of our lives of Faith. Therefore, I strongly suggest that the wonderful Encyclicals/Apostolic Exhortations of Pope Francis ie “Evangelii Gaudium”, “Laudato Si’,” Gaudete et Exultate” and “Amoris Laetitia” taught in Homilies and in group discussions be encouraged to share and learn this wisdom in all parishes.</p>
<p>7. My Story I am a Religious of the [ - ] (known as [ - ]). I have taught in [my order’s] schools in [three states]. I was Novice Mistress for 4 years in [ - ], and also a student at [ - ]. My formation in our [order’s] Spirituality has been ongoing in Australia and Overseas throughout my life. In 1988 I studied Pastoral Work through a Clinical Pastoral Education Course at [ - ]. After that, I became a Pastoral Assistant at [ - ] parish, [ - ]—and since then I have been involved in three other parishes. Unfortunately, Catholics—or most of them—were not re-educated in the Faith after Vatican II—so my experience has revealed that many people know little about their Faith, but many still value it and are still faithfully attending Mass. In [ - ] we have a splendid [ - ] Centre, from which lecturers are willing to visit parishes and re-educate parishioners. But without real leadership from bishops and parish priests, this does not happen. This lethargy among Catholics is why I have made this Submission to the Plenary Council. I suggest introducing the methods of Basic Christian Communities, where people study the Gospels in small Groups, learn to listen, discuss and learn from the Holy Spirit within them and from one another. Seminary Formation quite inadequate today and an entirely new way necessary. [ - ].</p>
<p>My belief in Jesus Christ through the Church has been a strength which I have always cherished.</p>
<p>I came back to the Church because a friend asked if I'd be interested in going to Mass for Lent. He also suggested going to confession in preparation. There is the role of lay people in the Church. Forget about giving everyone a job on the altar—ministers for this and that. Forget it. Encourage them instead to pray for the friends, family and neighbours before inviting them you come back!</p>
<p>God gave us a child after 18 years of marriage.</p>
<p>My darling mother divorced my father, when I was young. He was not a good man. She never received communion till after he died. We attended Mass together weekly. After I went to communion, she would hug my arm to be closer to Jesus. My mother was a good woman and had a deep faith. She was a novitiate of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. I believe Jesus is standing with his arms outstretched to embrace us at communion I don’t think He would have turned her away.</p>
<p>I joined a Charismatic prayer group several years ago and this brought me to a deeper knowledge of Jesus and the Church. I no longer attend but that’s due to a change in my circumstances and the lack of a group close by.</p>
<p>My life as a Sister of [ - ] in healthcare has taught me - The wonder of goodness in people.</p>

- The sufferings experienced by sickness, injury and disabilities in the face of absence of understanding, compassion or respect from those in their circle.
- I have learned that growth in the deep understanding of and capacity to live with, hospitality, respect, compassion and justice is very energising and empowering for life to the full for many.
- Growing in learning how to be human from the lessons of Jesus in Scriptures is how I learned to grow as a person.
- Daily participation in Mass and the experiences of good liturgy have nourished and sustained me.

As said before, my son is gay. His partner is Catholic but his family was not welcomed in their parish after finding out about his sexuality. I think this is totally wrong and should not be the norm. As a result of this, his family has stopped going to that church and parish. I think this is a shame and it is driving people away from the Church.

After my father died in 2005 and mother died in 2009, I used to go to Mass daily. Poor people would come to me asking for money and guidance. I retired from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) in 2003 and am now a Catenian [office-holder] and Secretarial member of the Saint Vincent de Paul Conference in my parish of [ - ]. What I needed to help me and these people were a cohesive group of parishioners. I found my faith was lacking so I could not help those needier than myself. The group that helped me were the Dominicans Sisters. They had formed a Catholic group called the Centre for Faith Enrichment in the Archdiocese of [ - ] and schooled me back into my faith again after 30 years in the workforce. My point is that many people need schooling again back into the faith, especially the marginalized that float around the parishes and retired people like myself.

Question is:— How does the parish/archdiocese coordinate this. I became a Catenian member and a St Vincent de Paul member and an Acolyte and an Australian Family Association member. Now my problem is how do I coordinate all these Catholic/Christian groups under the one Banner of Christ? I pray the Holy Rosary of our Lady on Wednesdays when I can.

Question is:— how do we all become one? The answer I think lies with the distribution of manpower. My suggestion is to reverse the number of laypeople in ratio to the number of clerics thereby balancing out the duties of parishioners as to clerics. Would we be better served by more clerics in parliament and more laypersons in ministering the sacraments?

I am extremely disillusioned by the Church in Australia and the failure of our bishops and priests to stand up with conviction for the sake of the Gospel. With this spiritual climate, it is little wonder that we are dealing with such widespread scandal and an unwillingness for anyone to take seriously what the Catholic Church has to say.

In the 1960's, the Charismatic Movement made a big impact on people's lives. From my experience, it had a transforming effect—people radiated new life, joy, and a love for Scripture and deeper prayer life. The Movement was led mainly by lay people. Having been in Pakistan for some years and in South Africa for a few years, I realise our great need to be a Celebrating Church. With Catholics in the minority and despite the poverty that existed, their humility and gratitude for the gift of faith was very evident. The Eucharist and other ceremonies had often to be held outdoors due to huge crowds, with laity involvement except for the celebration of the Eucharist. Our Archbishop [ - ], after extensive consultation conducted with parishes has made available on website a revised Pastoral Council Constitution and e-handbook. The purpose being to encourage, invigorate and assist parish Pastoral Councils and parishes as a whole discern how better to engage all members to work collaboratively within the life of the Archdiocese as well as the life of the parish in fulfilling the Church's Mission—the Mission of Christ as proposed by the Gospels.

My years in Pakistan and the few in South Africa had a big impact on me. Despite the poverty that existed, their gratitude for the gift of Faith was very evident. In the village where I lived and worked, people walked for miles to avail of the Eucharist. For major Church feasts, celebrations were held outdoors to accommodate the crowds.

I am determined to be and remain a Catholic, basically because I am one already, but as you might be able to tell from the above responses, I'm not very happy about it and the state of the Church. I'm

pretty unimpressed with the Catholic Church's current inability to address my spiritual needs or provide supportive spiritual guidance which I am seeking at this time. Instead, I'm having to turn to fundamentalist, Christian friends who have some quite strong ideas, that I find overwhelming at times, and videos on You Tube. I seriously shouldn't have to watch YouTube for stuff like this. Real people need real people and the internet should only be used as a useful tool for surveys like this and arranging real social gatherings with other alive human beings! I would be happy to share the full story about my experience of faith or of the Church in Australia if you are interested. Please contact me at [ - ]. I have no intention of putting in the time and effort into writing my story down, without reassurance that at least one person would actually read it or be interested.

I know about God (everyone said they do, in western society) and am one of them but until university that I encounter Him. I wish someone has taught me about Jesus when I was younger (not just the story). I think that is the problem, if they truly know Jesus, they would have been walking with him every day.

I was 18 years old when I converted to the Roman Catholic faith in England in 1955. I was a young nurse and was taken by a Catholic colleague to Benediction which was in Latin. It impressed me profoundly because of its beauty and holiness so it was after that that I sought instruction in the Catholic faith. The priest who taught me was a humble holy man who used to visit his parishioners on a bicycle. He caught TB from some of his poorer parishioners. I was working on a maternity ward at the time and one day a baby was brought into the dressing room in a kidney dish which she was big enough to fill. Her little mouth was opening and shutting but no sound was coming out. In those days, babies born as prematurely as she was were disposed of without ceremony. A week before this, Father [ - ] had been teaching me about baptism and had told me that anyone could baptise especially if the person was in danger of death so somewhat tentatively I baptised this poor little creature with water and the words the priest had taught me to say. I called her Mary after the Blessed Mother whom I had had a devotion to since I saw her statue as a child being carried through my village during the May procession which the Catholics in the village always walked in. I remember vividly what I thought as it passed by my house. "I wish we had something like that". I was brought up Methodist on the lovely Bible stories and the beautiful fellowship evident amongst Methodists. I asked the priest what made the Catholic religion the "right" religion and he quoted me the Petrine text. The Methodists had instilled in me such a love for Jesus that I thought that if Jesus had said that we must do as he says out of love for Him. In a way, it was the fact that Roman Catholicism has the Papacy which brought me into the Church because it seemed common sense to me. I had learned all about the English Reformation at school and realised that the Papacy in Rome was a safeguard against "Royal Popes". Therefore I have been influenced by the Papacy and especially by St. John Paul II who was very pro-life. During his Papacy, there was Mother Teresa who was also very pro-life and her visit to Western Australia also influenced me.

Yes. Vatican II 😊 My life was changed forever with the new humble attitude, seeking, wisdom and inclusivity of Vat II. The 70's were such an exciting time as I discovered my faith anew and met Jesus my Lord. Praise God! Liturgies were alive and enriching. Nowadays I cannot find much in the Church way of continuing to delve into the riches of Vat II. It is only in personal prayer and study that I seek to enrich my own "Pentecost" and I thank God daily for such undeserved but gratefully received blessings. But how many, many people—lay religious and clergy to not know, or have forgotten, about this rich diamond mine of Vatican II? 48 years ago—inspired by Vatican II—I believe I received a call from God to live a life of prayer and service of the Kingdom of God lived out as a single celibate lifestyle in the world. I prepared, prayed, studied and sought discernment and five years later with my spiritual director and in front of supportive friends made a lifelong Commitment to this Calling. By the grace of God I have lived out this gift—but such a lifestyle is not yet recognised by the Church. There is no Church rule to acknowledge this gift from God! After 2000 years, God is still not fitting into Church Rules! How many others have received this gift that is not recognised? It hurts to be excluded. At least I can feel genuine when I support so many others I constantly meet who have also been hurt by Church rules.

From [ - ]—Growing up in Scotland he didn't experience leadership from the clergy. Leadership came from his parents. They taught him his faith. They instilled in him a love of all things "Church". He finds it disappointing that some of the reverence has gone. It has been replaced with a sort of casualness that has distracted us from something that is very important. Holiness is important. He referred especially with the way the Pix is handled at our parish. [ - ] would like to hear sermons more relevant to daily life.

[ - ]—Had a very positive experience provided by the clergy growing up that continues to influence her life to this very day. Coming from a dysfunctional home, the Sisters showed her such love and compassion. She credits them for instilling in her a love of God and for learning. She was told by a sister, "Join a church no matter where you go, you will find a friend." She has found this to be so very true.

[ - ] is a great believer in Ecumenism. She has been involved at various times in England and Australia, and has found that when the different churches come together many problems can be sorted out enabling all churches to move forward in a more positive way.

[ - ]—came from a Germany where Church had a strong focus on youth programmes that were centred on having fun, teaching about the faith and a tolerance for all. When she came to Australia, she found the Church very conservative with many Irish priests preaching "fire and brimstone". She found it very different. Ecumenism also featured strongly in her growing up. She remembers many interactions between Catholics and Lutherans that were always very positive. She has only recently been through a divorce and she has felt very supported by her parish family. They are providing for her a spiritual life-line of which she is very grateful.

[ - ]—Historically the Church was intolerant—bigoted, inward-looking and arrogant.

[ - ] is the product of a mixed marriage just as most marriages were in his family. So, Church was a bit hit and miss. He remembers sermons about "fire and brimstone" and the power and sway of the Irish priests at the time. He is very worried that Australia, not only Catholics are heading down the path of intolerance, racism—just as we did prior to Vatican II. He sees we haven't made too many inroads with our treatment and support for the aborigines and now the rising intolerance of Muslims.

[ - ] would like to see a great fairness for all. History shows us that inequality from a class-based society perpetuates inequality causing social unrest and discontent. People should be given the opportunity to realize their potential—historically the Church has sided with the landed/wealthy of our society.

[ - ]—Faith was learnt from my parents. From dad I saw faith in action. The Sisters and Church were strict and spoke of so many rules and the consequences if we chose not to adhere to those rules.

I will prefix this section by advising that as a person who grew up in regional [ - ] and who attended university in [ - ], I have been a member of several parishes during my life ([list]). The following observations are collected from these parishes.

1. First quarter of 2013. The newly arrived parish priest started each week's homily with a joke. A few weeks later, after having attended a retreat, he advised that the local archbishop ([ - ]) had informed a group of priests on the retreat that jokes should not be told as part of their homilies. This priest then proceeded to tell the congregation that he was going to still tell jokes each week in defiance of the archbishop's instructions. This was wholly distressing to me. What was apparent was that this priest's ability to make the congregation laugh was far more important than the responsibility he owed to his office, to his congregation and to his archbishop. In short, he preached to be personally likeable and popular. His homilies typified the 'feel good Gospel' of kum ba ya. I want to hear God's truth, no matter how unpopular it might be and its application for today in a materialistic and hedonistic world.

2. Second quarter of 2014. Fr 'Feel Good' preaches that there is no one in Hell and that this is the official position of the Catholic Church. When I politely asked Father about this after Mass, I was summarily given a verbal 'dressing down' and accused of not having read enough of the Bible and that I was suffering from a complete lack of understanding of Church theology. This occurred in the

church foyer while he was still wearing his microphone (turned on). This conversation was heard by all those still inside the church. My concern is that this is an extremely harmful message ... i.e. 'do what thou wilt, God is infinitely merciful'. This is utter bollocks and is contrary to Jesus' own words on Hell in the Gospels, is contrary to the Catechism (Jesus descended to the dead not for the sake of the damned, but for the sake of the righteous), is contrary to the teachings of the Doctors of the Church and is contrary to many of the messages/visions given by Our Lady, including at Fatima.

3. During communion, where intinction was being performed, there were drops of the precious blood on the floor (ban this).

4. After receipt of communion in the hand, the recipient attempted to conceal the host rather than immediately consume it. Fortunately, the parish priest noticed and followed the person so as to ensure its consumption. Communion in the hand allows for the sacrilegious removal of hosts from churches for goodness knows what evil purposes. This practice is on the rise, particularly in the USA, where satanic cults openly advertise black Masses.

Like my brother priests and indeed the entire Church in Australia, I found myself shocked and disturbed by the stories coming out of the Royal Commission, the attacks on vulnerable children, the betrayal of trust, the trauma suffered by survivors which is on-going and life-long, the thousands of victims, the way that some bishops covered it all up simply moving priests on to destroy the lives of more children. I believe that the only way that the Church can be "rehabilitated" is by hearing from individual survivors what they have endured, allowing them to grieve, and taking responsibility as a Church for these crimes against humanity. For those who would be willing to tell their stories, it may be helpful just being listened to; and for us, a way of experiencing healing and forgiveness as a Church. One thing that has helped me personally was something that I experienced in South America. There I got to learn about and take part in the Small Christian Community movement. Poor people in the parish would come together in neighbourhood groups of 9 or 10 to read and reflect on gospel stories and relate them to their own lives and struggle to feed their families. They came to recognize their rights and to stand up for them against a brutal dictatorship and exploitative economic system. In [ - ] parish where I was stationed in the '90's, we started a number of such groups. Coming to [ - ], I worked for years in the prisons as a chaplain. One thing that was of enormous help to me was a Small Christian community which met each Wednesday night in a Soup Kitchen. We would take the Gospel reading for the following Sunday, read it once, reflect on it in silence, read out aloud any phrase that "spoke to us", read the gospel again, reflecting on the story itself and then relating it to some situation we found ourselves in recently that we felt challenged or moved by, perhaps a Kairos moment when we saw things in a different light. We would then pray about it and talk of what we might do as a result. For me, this group was a source of strength and inspiration in my prison ministry with its stresses and tensions. I believe that such communities can be of immense help to us in creating community in our parishes. They offer the laity the opportunity to experience the Risen Christ in their midst, to share their life experiences and relate them to the life of Jesus, to know that none of us walk alone. It is not possible to do this during a Sunday Mass obviously. What is shared in the group is strictly confidential. Praying together brings with it a sense of being loved and accepted. I believe that this Plenary Council is a special gift of the Spirit in these troubled times when morale is low. And many are leaving the Church in disgust. It is precisely now when the Church has been humiliated and its sinfulness exposed that we are ready to lay ourselves open to the stirrings of the Holy Spirit. The only way now is "up" into the arms of the Beloved.

Yes, I had a horrible experience when I immigrated to Australia from the West Indies. My uncle was a CSSP priest and had given me permission to use the pill for birth control for six months. When this time was up, we were still not settled and I went to Confession to ask for further time. The priest would not give me Absolution but was kind enough to refer me to a priest in the Monastery who before hearing my story gave me absolution. This could have put me off Religion and the Church for life but luckily, I had had a very good grounding in the religious way of life and was close to Jesus so I continued to practise my Faith and went on to study Theology at University and have come to realise those things I have stated above. It is about our relationship with Jesus that is important.

In 2014, I had a serious cancer operation, and had many, many after-problems, but with the help of an Oblate priest, and lots of prayer, I am now well. I have proven many times when asking God for help through praying to Holy Mary, that prayers do work miracles.

I am currently studying a Master in Teaching at [ - ] (Maths and RE). I attend classes with other students who are studying to be RE teachers at Catholic schools. In my conversations with them, I have discovered that a number of are not practising Catholics or are even interested in the faith. They qualify for teaching RE because they were Confirmed as a child. However, they study the RE subjects so they can receive a tick to teach in Catholic schools, thereby expanding their job prospects. One student told me they hadn't attended Mass since their Confirmation, while another informed me that they don't believe in the material. I am reluctant for my children to attend Catholic schools where RE teachers are not practising Catholics or believe in the teachings of the Church. I believe our Church should require that only practising Catholics can teach RE at school. I am certain that Muslims and Jews would never allow non-faithful teachers to teach their faith to their children. I believe Catholic parents should expect nothing less from our Catholic schools.

Being a country priest, I face unique challenges. Sure, Church numbers are down everywhere, but in the city one can be insulated from this downward turn. In these churches, every pew has at least one family in it and the parish bills keep getting paid without too much fuss. In the country, no such insulation exists. The downward turn is felt keenly. Indeed—to use the colloquial expression—it is “in your face.” One of the Mass Centres in my parish is officially an “ex-Mass Centre.” It is a nice little country church with a nice little history. Parishioners apparently worked really hard to get the building project off the ground. But as I said, it is now an “ex-Mass Centre.” The church still stands. We—that is the parishioners 70 kilometres up the road in the “mother Mass Centre”—continue to pay the compulsory insurance on the building. But there is no Mass. Simply because there is no-one interested in going to Mass in the town. I went into the church one day—to satisfy curiosity—and was greatly saddened by what I saw. Cobwebs and dust and broken windows. The heart-breaker in the midst of all of it? The parish bulletins were still on the back table from the last Mass celebrated in the building. The date of those bulletins? Christmas 2012. I stayed the night in this town on that occasion. It seemed that there were slim pickings as far as there being any interest in the unknown priest figure. Most people kept to themselves in the pub that night. A brief chat with the local gardener and a bonus prawn from the cook who noticed that a priest was seated at the bar was about all the headway that I was able to make in that town that night. And of course, there was no Mass. I left that town early the next morning. The town without God. Two years later I returned to that town. It just happened to be the best overnight stop on a long journey back from annual leave to my parish. I went to the bar and ordered a beer, grilled barramundi and a room for the night. I was pleasantly surprised to have the charge completely waived by the generous soul working the bar that night—an ex-altar boy. He took me round and introduced me to the other patrons seated on their bar-stools. One fellow came up to me with a gleam in his eye and introduced himself and said to me “We remember you from last time.” They remembered me from last time. 2 years ago. Seated at that same bar. Seemingly failing, since no-one appeared interested in chatting to this unknown priest figure. But, turns out, they were interested. The feeling I got was that they spoke regularly about that unknown priest figure who turned up in the town without God two years ago. My experiences in this town without God have shaped me deeply I think. I can't help juxtaposing the maintenance aspect of the Church's presence in this town, on the one hand, and the missionary aspect, on the other. The juxtaposition is this: ineffective expensive maintenance vs somewhat effective inexpensive mission.

Parish life which is not at all life inspiring. Father knows best.... and he is so out of touch with reality.

I came back to Church after the death of my dear uncle, I was embraced at my local parish in [ - ] [ - ] over 30 years ago with a wonderful priest and I became an active member in the parish. I left the parish when he was replaced by a priest that in my view does not mirror Jesus. I went to [ - ] [ - ]. Fantastic experience and I am now in a wonderful parish in [ - ] in [ - ]. The Monsignor works really hard and the homilies are really good. However I live in [ - ]. The church experience was less than

satisfying and tried a lot of churches along the road to [ - ]. I want to leave Mass each week feeling I have been spoken to by someone that understands life's struggles and how we must strive to live a life like Jesus. If the priests aren't able to give a good homily because they are too old and over it (many are) or just not skilled, we have technology now that can help them. They could stream a message from other priest or bishops, I am mobile and had the ability to change but many of the elderly just sit in Mass disengaged.

- My experience of faith in Jesus was from the time I was brought up in India. I was taught by my Catholic parents and teachers as I had gone to a Catholic school. With their guidance, I learned about the sacraments which all Catholic children were stressed upon to keep. Keeping of the sacraments formed the fulcrum of our life.

- In Australia as there were many churches and Catholic schools we quite easily integrated with our Catholic community here and brought up the children as we were brought up back in India.

- The only difference was that the children did not receive the high degree of religious education that we received in India. Sadly, we got to know only once the children had flown the coop.

- We now pray for Australia.

From Both Sides Now 'Twas the night before Christma s... Actually, it was three days before Christmas, but it was the night before the tenth anniversary of my ordination. I packed my clothes and books into the little Ford Escort and drove off from the Home leaving behind my chalice, unworn ornate crocheted alb, and mainly pleasant memories. I was now 32, had entered the seminary at 15 after 5 years in a Catholic boarding school. I had lived for 10 years at an Old People's Home while teaching at a Catholic high school. I was thoroughly institutionalised and was now facing an unknown future in the wide world. I had visited the bishop four months earlier requesting leave of absence. After listening sympathetically, he expressed his concern. "But, [ - ], what are we going to tell the people at the Home?" Naively, I replied, "How about the truth, my lord?" The bishop's jaw fell loose, his face grew pale and he stammered, "M-m-miGod, [ - ], we c-couldn't do that!" While in the seminary I had expressed doubts about my suitability for pastoral work, but the priest just poo-pooed my concern and told me to clean my fingernails (which had got dirty in doing heavy labouring work for him). My reason for leaving was threefold: concern about my ability to relate to people, about the U-turn from the Council the Church was taking and a sense of loss of purpose. At the personal level, the attitude of Catholics was almost always positive. As one relative said, "Welcome! A new member to our laity." Immediately after leaving, I worked for two years in a Catholic school where the Brothers showed warm friendship in every way. Priests from my diocese that I ran into were always pleasant. Bishop [ - ] was a great help. Unfortunately, I can't say the same about the response from the institution. In those few months before leaving, I was sent to a priest counsellor. He told me I was on the verge of a total mental collapse. After sessions with him, I left crushed and dejected—for a day or two anyway. For a year after leaving, I attended group sessions run by a decent bloke, but seemingly going nowhere. After that, I received no official communication from the Church whatsoever. Years later, a priest suggested I try for laicisation as he heard some were being granted. In the process, I discovered that being cooperative militated against me as the Church wouldn't want to let me go. Had I been rebellious, they would have laicised me immediately. At my final interview, I was given a one-page summary of my restrictions. Asking for the full document, I was told, "No, they're in Latin." I answered, "I can read Latin." He promised to send them. I am still waiting. I am also waiting for the Church to state that no ex-priest will be discriminated against in applying for any lay position. In summary, no regrets about entering; no regrets about leaving. While perhaps it's life's illusions I recall, I can still hope—not rejoice that things are going well but striving for what is good.

My involvement in the Young Christian Workers Movement in the 50s and 60s and with Caritas, previously Australian Catholic Relief since 1964.

When I was younger and living in Malaysia, my mother takes my brothers and I to church regularly on a Sundays. What impressed me when I was young was the music. In church, it was always tedious to listen to the long sermons/homilies the priest would say but my attention was always riveted to

the Choir mistress and the organist when there was any hymn being sung. Going to the Carmelite churches when attending the novenas or benedictions, the atmosphere was always made sacred when we hear the Carmelite nuns sing 'o salutaris hostia' or 'down in adoration falling'. Here in Australia, after attending the copyright workshop and hearing how churches in NSW were penalised when they breached copyright made me very sad. I then thought why not have the one payment paid as a blanket to cover all churches and protect all Christian who wants to sing relevant hymns for the relevant Sundays. It would rectify any issues of copyright payments. All the individual churches need to only submit the copyright hymns sung on the Sundays.

I have been involved in pastoral ministry in health and aged care for a number of years. I have experienced how faith and good pastoral care is capable in reaching out to others. I have also experienced negative aspects of the Church including clergy and religious whose lives and actions are far away from the Gospel they supposedly serve and whose personality and lifestyles are incongruent with the Christian faith and a potential for scandal. As a result, I have come to appreciate the need for alignment between inner beliefs and values and the way we live those beliefs and values in the wider world.

I am stunned and delighted at the discovery of the old form of Mass and in a few short months, this has done more to build up my faith than 10 years in our local secular religious parish.

I'm afraid my experience of faith has very little to do with the Church in Australia. I spent my early years in Malaysia very actively involved in the Church there (as an Altar Server and member of a choir). This was not difficult as the churches in Malaysia are few but each with a large parish and as such, various social and ministerial groups are easily formed. However, I confess that my faith was not fully formed under these circumstances although they served to keep me regularly in the church. My faith was strengthened through extensive reading of Catholic material beginning with Scott and Kimberley Hahn's "Rome Sweet Home" through to other wonderful books such as Catherine of Sienna's 'Little Talks With God' (a condensed version of 'Dialogue'), and 'The Catechism of the Catholic Church' to name a few. I also enjoyed conversion stories which provided many proofs that the fullness of truth is found in the Catholic Church. To strengthen my faith, I also watch the Catholic television network and many podcasts on YouTube. I believe there are many Catholics like me whose faith is or can be strengthened by the knowledge of why we believe what we believe. My 'epiphany moments' as I call them bring me such joy whenever I am touched by a moment of understanding of truth. It saddens me to think that there are some who seek to deprive others of such joy by pushing their agenda of a watered-down Catholic faith and that there are those in authority who allow them to do so.

I have always been part of Church life while I lived in London, but coming to [ - ] and being part of the Church here has shown me how everyone has a part to play. We all have God-given gifts that we are meant to share and seeing those gifts and encouraging others and being encouraged is truly beautiful. I would embrace a relaxed and welcoming Church that celebrates the uniqueness in each one of us.

I feel that my marriage to my husband and the fact that we are practicing Catholics is an ongoing strengthening sacramental bond between us. Wherever we are, we always find ways to attend Mass as this is a priority in our lives. I teach in a Catholic school and find it challenging to experience lax attitudes about the importance of attending Mass. Parents are the first educators of their children, yet they sometimes believe that we the teachers are responsible for their children's faith development. i.e. they don't have to take them to Mass because it's up to the school!

My faith journey has been a roller coaster ride for the last 46 years. For the first 21 years, I blindly went to church every Sunday with my parents. We had to go; there was no option. During my university year (ages 18–21), I went as it was a stipulation of living at home but I questioned more. When I first started teaching, if it wasn't for my job—teaching in a Catholic school, I would have attended a lot less. And at different stages for the next 10 years, I did attend a lot less. My sisters' passing brought me back to the Church for a few years and then having my own children has made me want to continue more. However, I am finding less and less relevance with attending every

<p>Sunday and even though I am now a Catholic school Principal, I don't. I am lucky I have an outstanding priest in my parish and school but have heard of the horror stories of bad, misinformed, boring, irrelevant priests and if my school or parish had one I would not attend and certainly wouldn't make my children attend. The Church needs to be more relevant, needs to open its doors to female and married priests, need to apologise for the sins of the past and needs to have shorter more 'hip' Masses. The Mass is not about the priest it is about community.</p>
<p>I was Anglican and married a Catholic. My children were born and readily baptised, I wanted to be a positive role model and so participated in the RCIA program and did this for 6 months (with a very small baby at the time) and then when it came to be going to see the Archbishop a couple of weeks before Easter my name wasn't on the list. I enquired and then was told by the priest slightly embarrassed (would have been much better to have told me before!). My husband was previously married in the Catholic Church and had divorced and we got married at my home. As his marriage had not been annulled then we weren't recognised as being married. So I couldn't become a Catholic. I was so hurt and upset how it had been handled and didn't understand the rules. My husband passed away 5 years later and the family priest contacted me then and I did become a Catholic and teach in a Catholic school and am actually Assistant Principal Religious Education. I don't believe you should be able to turn people away.</p>
<p>The good people that I have encountered have had a huge influence. I attend Mass because I want to. The teachings of Jesus are a great moral compass for everyday living. However, I have friends who have not had such beautiful and healthy encounters and as a result, still suffer from injustice and loss of innocence.</p>
<p>I am lucky to have a fantastic parish priest at the moment but it hasn't always been like that. Priest that are very set in their ways and lecturing dogmatically do nothing to encourage young people to want to be a part of the Church. Experiences with bishops where women, namely nuns fawning all over them and waiting on them hand and foot did nothing to enhance the image of connectedness or respect for the clergy.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mother Theresa</li> <li>- Healing with the sick-bringing comfort</li> <li>- showing patience, being softly spoken, being a good listener, think about the other person</li> <li>- as a teacher acting like a mother</li> <li>- hugging</li> <li>- Mass.</li> <li>- Homily</li> <li>- Sharing/listening to real life stories</li> <li>- Missionary/charity nuns</li> <li>- Example is done well at funerals, births and marriages</li> </ul>
<p>My children are brought up in the Catholic Faith and their Aunty is a lesbian. I do not want them to be taught antiquated ideals of homosexuality being 'wrong' and therefore thinking their Aunty is wrong.</p>
<p>I used to attend church every week and thought I was a 'good Catholic'. It was not until I stopped going to Church each week that I realised that was not what made me a good Catholic but in fact, spending time with God and following in his footsteps. I now focus on doing more for others in need and being a more forgiving person. That should surely please God more than simply attending church each week and not following in his footsteps.</p>
<p>I've been a Catholic for 30 years since my wife introduced me to the faith, and we were, I would say nominal Catholics. About 12 years ago (age 40-ish), my faith really deepened by His Grace, and I learned so much about the Catholic Faith, that I hadn't lived truly in accordance with (I never went to confession once in those 18 years). Everything I learned was NOT from the ordinary parishes that we frequented in the UK and Australia. I learned it by listening to Evangelical faithful Catholics who taught me the one true faith via Books, CD's, online, etc. Once I was blessed with the Grace to truly believe it WAS Jesus in the Eucharist, I realised my orientation in Life and my worship was all wrong.</p>

I started to receive Our Lord on the tongue and kneeling, and went to confession more frequently. Then a year or so ago, we discovered the Extraordinary Form Mass. Wow!! Only when we started going to this Mass, did I realise how woeful the Ordinary Mass was in terms of reverent worship and teaching of the traditional faith. All of this is only by God's grace that I have come to know and love Jesus and His Church (visible and invisible) more, and continue to strive to be faithful. As a result of my earlier years for poor formation, we lost all 4 of our children from the Catholic faith and thanks be to God, one of them has returned, and the others whilst practicing the Christian faith, have not yet returned despite my wife's and my prayers. I do believe this is because of poor teaching and worship (on my part as well as the priests and schools) that they have left the Catholic faith. In the Extraordinary Form parish, I've witnessed a complete reversal of the balance between Old and Young people, and families with many children. This has to be saying something about the worship, and teaching of the true, and traditional faith. Doesn't it? Please don't conform to the ways or the world. Recover what it means to be Catholic, which means we have to put our Light on the Hill, and be Salty! That means many will reject the faith, but many more will be saved! Right Worship, Right teaching to give better example is what's required.

## 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 Archdiocese of Perth.

Country	Number of respondents
Australia	652
Algeria	1
Antigua and Barbuda	1
Argentina	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Botswana	1
Brazil	1
Canada	3
Chile	2
Congo, Republic of the...	1
Croatia	2
Fiji	1
Finland	1
France	1
Germany	4
Hong Kong (S.A.R.)	2
Hungary	1
Iceland	1
India	49
Indonesia	11
Ireland	23
Italy	12
Kazakhstan	1
Kenya	3
Kuwait	1
Lithuania	1
Malaysia	30
Malta	2
Mauritius	2

Country	Number of respondents
Mexico	1
Myanmar	4
Netherlands	6
New Zealand	5
Nigeria	1
Pakistan	2
Peru	1
Philippines	12
Poland	2
Portugal	2
Rwanda	1
Serbia	1
Singapore	15
South Africa	20
South Korea	2
Spain	2
Sri Lanka	7
Trinidad and Tobago	6
Uganda	2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	57
United States of America	3
Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of...	1
Viet Nam	3
Zambia	1
Zimbabwe	3
Not stated	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,082</b>

## APPENDIX 2: COMPLETE LIST OF GROUPS FROM YOUR DIOCESE

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

Name of group	Group size
The Apostles of Perpetual Adoration	2,000
Our Lady of the Mission Parish, Whitfords	1,000
Holy Family Catholic Parish	600
Newman College, Perth	257
Sts John and Paul Catholic Parish Willetton	159
Newman College	159
Servite College	150
Our Lady of the Visitation, 34 Santa Gertrudis Drive, Lower Chittering WA 6084	150
Pater Noster/Saint Joseph Pignatelli Parish	150
Iona Presentation College	140
La Salle College	135
Holy Trinity Parish, New Norcia, WA	120
Emmanuel Catholic College	110
North Perth Monastery	100
St Brigid's College	100
Sacred Heart College	100
Our Group is the Catholic Parish of Queens Park/East Cannington	100
Irene McCormack Catholic College	100
St. Denis Church, Joondanna	100
North Perth Monastery Friday Group 4	90
North Perth Monastery Friday Group 6	90
North Perth Monastery Group 7	90
Ursula Frayne Catholic College	80
Perth Council for Australian Catholic Women.	70
St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Catholic Parish	68
Greenwood Catholic Parish	60
Responses from Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Rockingham, WA	59
Holy Rosary Parish	56
Langford Parish	55
Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Kelmscott, WA	52
Apostles of Perpetual Adoration	50
Whitford Catholic Primary School	50

<b>Name of group</b>	<b>Group size</b>
Mel Maria Primary School	50
Chisholm Catholic College	48
20181128-Queen of Apostles Parish	45
St Francis Xavier Parish	44
Clontarf Aboriginal College	40
St Anthony's (SA) Wanneroo	40
Perth Chinese Catholic Community	40
Holy Rosary Parish	40
Holy Rosary Parish Nedlands	40
Holy Rosary Parish Nedlands	40
Holy Rosary Parish Nedlands W.A.	40
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 5	40
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 6	40
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 7	40
St. Emilie DeVialar Youth Group	39
Parish of Queen of the Apostles - Riverton	38
Parish of Queen Of Apostles - Riverton	38
St Simon Peter Parish	35
Chisholm Catholic College	35
Archdiocesan of Perth Parish Secretary	34
Mary's Mount Primary School	34
Focolare Perth	34
November Group 1 Monastery North Perth	32
St Anthony's School	32
Presentation Sisters WA Inc	30
Our Lady Of Lourdes Parish Nollamara	30
SSJG Ministries	30
Catenian Association City of Perth Circle	30
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 8	30
Chisholm Catholic College Yr 8	30
Lay Community of the Redemptorist Monastery North Perth WA	29
Mercedes College	29
Knights of the Southern Cross Western Australia Branch 34 Armadale	28
St Cecilia's Church Floreat WA	28
Seton Catholic College	27
Hilton Parish	27
Youth from Mary MacKillop Catholic Community Church, Ballajura WA	26

Appendix 2: Complete list of groups from your diocese

Name of group	Group size
STMC Chapel Community	26
The Vietnamese Catholic in Perth	26
Goomalling WA	25
Safeguarding Program	24
Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School	24
St Mary's Parish, Guildford	23
St Mary's Parish, Guildford	23
St Francis of Assisi, Maida Vale, WA	22
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Scarborough Perth WA	22
Seton Catholic College	21
Religious of Western Australia (16 members)	20
St Cecilia's Church Floreat WA	20
20181102 Queen of Apostles Riverton	20
St Francis of Assisi, Maida Vale	20
Our Lady of Grace - Holy Family of Nazareth Association	20
Manning Parish, Church of St Pius X	20
Perth Fraternity of the Ordo Franciscan Seculars	20
Perth Konkans	20
Mater Christi Parish	20
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 3	20
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 4	20
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 9	20
St Thomas More Parish Session 10	20
John XXIII College	18
Little Sisters of the Poor	17
Innaloo / Karrinyup Parish	17
October 1 Group North Perth Monastery	16
St Augustine Parish	16
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 11	16
St Columba's Catholic Primary School	16
St Thomas Claremont	16
St Thomas Parish	16
Canning Vale Parish	16
St Thomas The Apostle Church in Claremont W.A.	15
St Aloysius Catholic Parish in Shenton Park	15
Office of Christian Initiation Archdiocese of Perth	15
Youths of Queen of Apostles Church - Riverton	15
Santa Maria College	15

Name of group	Group size
St Thomas The Apostle Church	15
Indonesian Catholic Community of Perth	15
St. Lawrences Parish	15
Flame Ministries International	15
St Thomas Parish Claremont	14
Holy Trinity Prayer Group	14
John Paul Youth	14
Aboriginal Catholic Ministry	14
Mother Teresa Catholic College	14
STMC Chapel Community Group 2	14
Focolare Group C	14
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish	13
Communities of the Way	13
SVDP	12
Mary Catholic Church Ballajura	12
St Aloysius Catholic Parish in Shenton Park	12
Catholic Outreach	12
Benedictine Community New Norcia	12
St Clare's School	12
St Jerome's Parish	12
Parish of Bruce Rock Narembeen Quairading.	12
St Mary's Cathedral Perth WA	12
Holy Family Catholic Church Pastoral Parish Council	11
St Thomas More Bateman Session 13	11
St Cecilia's Parish Floreat/Wembley WA 6018	10
JOHN PAUL Willetton FACILITATION TEAM	10
Bolgart Mass Centre	10
Balcatta parish	10
Our Lady of Sorrows Prayer Group	10
Floreat Wembley Parish	10
Our Lady Help of Christians Parish East Victoria Park	10
Corpus Chrisit College	10
Corpus Christi College	10
Parish Council	10
Personal Advocay, Thornlie	10
Womens International Network Group	10
St Columba's Youth Group	10
RCIA Perth	10

Appendix 2: Complete list of groups from your diocese

Name of group	Group size
Mercedes College Advisory Council	10
Trustees of St John of God Healthcare	10
St Luke's Youth Group Woodvale	10
St Thomas More Parish Bateman Session 11	10
Perth Redemptorist Monastery Church Facilitator discussion group 1, 20 Aug 2018; Wed 19 Sep 2018	9
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Wilson, WA 1	9
Sacred Heart Parish Thornlie	9
Innaloo / Karrinyup PARISH	9
PREP	9
St Thomas More Bateman Session 12	9
Seaton Catholic College, Samson WA	9
Immaculate Heart Of Mary Parish Scarborough Perth WA	9
Vietnamese group - Ballajura Mary MacKillop parish Perth	9
JEDO CoM	9
Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart	8
Kilmolee October Group	8
Archdiocese meeting group	8
Homecell	8
Infant Jesus School	8
Discussion table	8
Longtime school friends	8
Christian Life Community Inc	8
St Jerome's Catholic Parish	8
Catholic Prison Chaplains	8
St Gerard Majella Church Westminster	8
Good Shepherd School	8
Iona Presentation College	8
Personal Advocacy Service, Archdiocese of Perth	8
Canning Vale Parish	8
South Perth Discussion Group	8
Sacred Heart Parish Steering Committee	8
Schoenstatt Mothers' Group	8
Review of life	7
CLC Moombaki group	7
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Wilson, WA 2	7
Office of Christian Initiation	7
Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Sacred Heart	7
Casual group who met after Weekday Mass - Meet 1	7

Name of group	Group size
Mass Centre of Wyalkatchem	7
Penola Community, West. Australia	7
Monday Group in South Perth	7
Just a group of friends	7
The future of the Church	7
Infant Jesus School	7
Infant Jesus School	7
Mercy College	7
Mater Christi catholic primary school	7
Corpus Christi college	7
Corpus Christi College	7
CCC	7
Baldivis Youth	7
November Group 3 Monastery North Perth	7
St Gerards Majella Parish	7
St Denis Youth Group	7
St Gerard Majella	7
Catholic Institute of WA	7
Wilson Catholic Parish	7
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Wilson	7
Disciples of Jesus	7
Voices of Kilmolee	6
Redemptorist Monastery Church	6
Ignatian Spirituality, Western Australia.	6
Catholic Charismatic Group Baldivis	6
Redemptorist Monastery North Perth	6
St Cecilia's Parish Floreat/Wembley WA	6
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	6
Infant Jesus School	6
Our Lady Help of Christians Parish	6
Mercy College Staff	6
Mercy College	6
Mater Christi CPS	6
Corpus Christi College	6
November Group 2 Monastery North Perth	6

Appendix 2: Complete list of groups from your diocese

Name of group	Group size
DOJ	6
Corpus Christi College	6
Catholic Youth Ministry	6
St Mary's Community	6
St Mary's Community	6
Neocatechumenal Way	6
Redemptorist Monastery	6
Redemptorist Monastery	6
Bencubbin - Sacred Heart Church	6
Kennedy Family	6
Neocatechumenal Way	6
Office of Christian Initiation	5
Redemptorist Monastery	5
Sisters of St Joseph	5
Sisters of St Joseph	5
Srs of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart.	5
St Simon Peter Parish	5
Parish group	5
The Abruzzi	5
Catholic Education Western Australia	5
St Lawrence Parish	5
Gosnells Catholic Parish	5
Infant Jesus 30.11.2018	5
Mercy College	5
Mercy College	5
Mercy College	5
Infant Jesus Parish	5
Group 5, Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, Gosnells WA 6110.	5
Kwinana Parish	5
Mixed group of individuals	5
Christian Life Group	5
Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School Kelmscott	5
Mrs	5
St Gerard's Church	5
St Francis of Assisi Parish	5
Neo-catechumenal Way	5
Parish of Mirrabooka, Neo-catechumenal community	5
Redemptorist Monastery	5

Name of group	Group size
St Gerard Majella	5
St Anthony's Wanneroo	5
Kalamunda Catenians	5
Our Lady Help of Christians Church	5
Companions CLC group	5
Leederville Parishoners	5
Neocatechumenal Community of St Gerards Mirrabooka	5
Concerned Catholics	5
Perth Archives Office and Professional Standards Office	5
Focolare Group D	5
Our Lady of Grace Parish	5
St Joseph's School Queens Park	5
Parish priest team	4
Redemptorist Monastery Perth	4
Redemptorist Monastery Group North Perth	4
St Thomas Catholic Primary Parents	4
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	4
North Perth Monastery Church WA	4
Infant Jesus Church	4
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	4
Archdiocese of Perth - Childrens Catechist	4
Archdiocese of Perth Children's Catechist 2020 Plenary Council	4
Archdiocese of Perth Children's Catechists Dialogue 2020 Plenary Council	4
Archdiocese of Perth Childrens Catechists Plenary 2020	4
Children' s Catechists archdiocese of Perth	4
Children's Catechist Archdiocesan	4
Women of the Gospel	4
Parish Secretaries of the Archdiocese of Perth	4
Parish Secretaries Archdiocese of Perth	4
Parish secretaries Archdiocese of Perth	4
Parish Secretaries Archdiocese of Perth	4
Parish Secretaries Group	4
Infant Jesus Morley WA	4
Infant Jesus Parish Morley WA	4
Ballajura Parish	4
St. Mary of the Cross Church, Ballajura, Perth, WA	4
St A discussion group within St Anthony's Parish, Wanneroo WA.	4

Appendix 2: Complete list of groups from your diocese

Name of group	Group size
Mary MacKillop Catholic Community	4
Mary MacKillop Catholic Community	4
Mary MacKillop Catholic Community	4
St Mary's Primary School Staff	4
St Marys	4
St Mary's Primary School Kalgoorlie	4
St Mary's Primary School	4
St Mary's Staff	4
St Mary's Primary School Kalgoorlie	4
St Marys Primary School	4
Our Lady of Good Counsel	4
Our Lady of Good Counsel	4
OLGC	4
Our lady of Good Counsel School	4
Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School	4
Staff Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School	4
Matthew Gibney CPS	4
Matthe Gibney Catholic primary School	4
Mater Christi Primary School	4
MM Group	4
Queen of Apostle's Church Youth ministry, Riverton, Perth, AU	4
Queen of Apostle's parish Riverton, Perth	4
St Thomas More Session 1	4
Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School	4
Faith Enrichment Centre, Perth	4
No name	4
Our Lady of Grace Parish	4
St Joseph's Catholic Church	4
Yr 12 Seton Catholic College	4
Patrick	4
Marist Brothers Churchlands community	4
John the Baptist Moora	4
Wanneroo Parish	4
Neocatechumenal Way	4
Catholic parents	4
Family Prayer Ministry	4
St Anthony's parish, Wanneroo	4
Diedler Family	4

Name of group	Group size
Ballajura Parish	4
St Thomas More Parish, Bateman Session 2	4
Mary MacKillop Catholic Primary School	4
Staff Mary Mackillop Catholic Community Primary School	4
Mary MacKillop Catholic Community PS	4
Mary MacKillop Catholic Community Primary School	4
Redemptorist Monastery N P.	3
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	3
Infant Jesus Parish Morley WA	3
Redemporist Monastery Church, North Perth, WA.	3
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	3
Parish Secretaries of Archdiocese of Perth	3
Parish Secretaries of the Archdiocese of Perth	3
Infant Jesus Parish	3
Mary Mackillop Catholic Community	3
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	3
Infant Jesus Parish Morley	3
St Mary's Pleanry Council Working Group	3
Mercy College	3
Forest Lakes Retirement Village	3
Catholic Mission Perth	3
DREAM team	3
Catholic Mission	3
First Neocatechumenal Community of St Mary's Cathedral Parish	3
Seton Catholic College	3
Atheism.com	3
Seton Catholic College	3
Boylen Family Submission	3
Nollamara Parish	3
Catechist Group WA	3
Maguire Family	2
Sr Dora Maguire	2
Infant Jesus Parish	2
Parish Secretary Group Archdioces of Perth	2
Mercy College	2
St Anthony's Wanneroo	2
Our Lady of Good Counsel	2
Neo-catechumenal family in mission in Australia	2

Appendix 2: Complete list of groups from your diocese

Name of group	Group size
West Australian Catholic Migrant & Refugee Office	2
M&E Boni	2
Her Honour Mary Ann Yeats AM	2
Corpus Christi college	1
Floreat/Wembley Parish	1
Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Lesmurdie, WA	Not Stated
Catholic Outreach	Not Stated
CCR Baldivis	Not Stated
Servite College Alpha group	Not Stated
North Perth Monastery Friday theme 9	Not Stated
Mary Mackillop Catholic Community	Not Stated
Catholic Parish of Applecross (St. Benedict's Church)	Not Stated
Catholic Schools Youth Summit	Not Stated
St Bernadette's Church	Not Stated
Immaculate Heart Of Mary Parish Scarborough WA	Not Stated
Our Lady Queen of Martyrs Maylands	Not Stated
Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Palmyra WA	Not Stated
Emmanuel Centre- the Catholic Ministry with people who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Western Australia	Not Stated
(Vietnamese Catholic Community WA)	Not Stated
Focolare Perth Group B	Not Stated
Group of 4	Not Stated
St Peter the Apostle	Not Stated

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