Australian Catholic Bishops Conference
Pastoral Research Office

Recent trends in the Catholic Church in Australia

Bob Dixon
Pastoral Research Office
With assistance from Fr Cyril Hally (1920 – 2010)

25 October 2013

Catholic communities

The Catholic population

Catholics in the Census

The religion question on the 2011 Census form

19 What is the person's religion?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- Examples of 'Other - please specify' are: SALVATION ARMY, HINDUISM, JUDAISM, HUMANISM.
- If no religion, mark the 'No religion' box.
- Remember to mark box like this: ■

- ☑ Catholic
- ○ Anglican (Church of England)
- ○ Uniting Church
- ○ Presbyterian
- ○ Buddhism
- ○ Greek Orthodox
- ○ Islam
- ○ Baptist
- ○ Lutheran

Other – please specify

- ○ No religion

The Catholic Community in Australia

"Snapshot" taken on Tuesday, 9 August 2011:

Australian population	21,507,719
Catholic population	5,439,268
% Catholic	25.3

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

The Catholic Community in Australia

"Snapshot" taken on Tuesday, 9 August 2011:

Of the 5.4 million Catholics …

Aboriginal & TSI Catholics	124,618	2.3%
Born overseas		23.6%
Born in NESC		17.9%
Speak LOTE		19.0%

All figures except 'Australian population' apply to Catholics only

NESC: Non-English Speaking Countries. LOTE: Language Other Than English

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

The Catholic Community of Broken Bay

"Snapshot" of the Diocese of Broken Bay	
Total population	887,195
Catholic population	223,240
% Catholic	25.2

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

The Catholic Community of Broken Bay

Of the 223,240 Catholics in Broken Bay …

Aboriginal & TSI Catholics	2,885	1.3%
Born overseas		22.8%
Born in NESC		15.5%
Speak LOTE		15.0%

All figures except 'Australian population' apply to Catholics only

NESC: Non-English Speaking Countries. LOTE: Language Other Than English

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Largest and smallest parishes (Australia 2011)

Parish	Catholics
Burleigh Heads	32,573
Jugiong *	86

* Smallest mainland parish. Rottnest Is (29) and Flinders Is (81) are smaller.

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Broken Bay: A multicultural community

Major countries of birth (other than Australia)

Non-English speaking	English speaking
Italy	United Kingdom
Philippines	New Zealand
South & Central America	Ireland
South Korea	North America
Hong Kong	South Africa
Croatia & former Yugoslavia	
Germany	
India	

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Main languages other than English spoken at home by Catholics in Broken Bay

Language	Catholics
Italian	6,534
Chinese languages	4,121
Spanish	3,237
Filipino languages	3,150
Korean	2,626
Arabic	1,753
Croatian	1,550
German	1,358
French	1,350
Portuguese	1,295
Polish	1,180

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Main countries of birth by parish

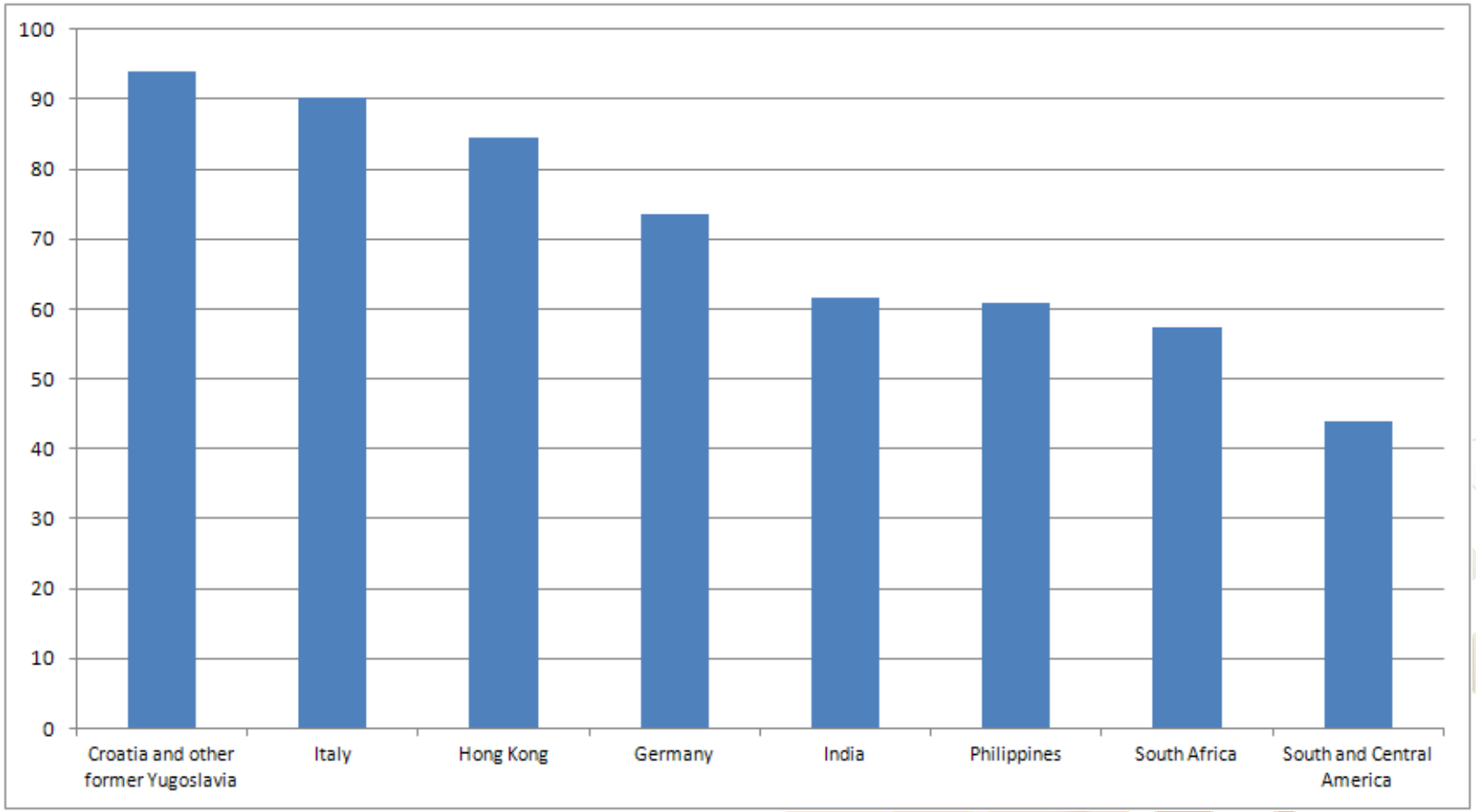
Broken Bay parishes with more than 1,100 Catholics born in non-English speaking countries

Parish	Born in NESC	% born NESC	Main countries of birth
Chatswood	2,577	29.9	South Korea, Philippines, Hong Kong
Pennant Hills	2,203	23.5	Lebanon, Italy, Philippines
Cathedral (Waitara)	2,169	38.3	Philippines, South Korea, Central & Sth America
Warringah (Dee Why)	1,873	26.1	Central & Sth America, Philippines, Italy
North Harbour	1,837	15.6	Italy, Central & Sth America, Philippines
Pymble	1,345	19.9	South Korea, Hong Kong, Philippines
Epping & Carlingford (Carlingford)	1,233	26.4	South Korea, Hong Kong, Italy
Frenchs Forest (Davidson)	1,199	16.4	Italy, Philippines, Central & Sth America
Lakes (Collaroy Plateau)	1,153	12.3	Italy, Central & Sth America, Philippines

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Major countries of birth of Catholics

(Per cent arriving before 2001) (Broken Bay Diocese)



Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Selected data about Catholics available from the 2011 Census (Broken Bay)

Catholic population	223,240
Families (at least one person Catholic)	85,605
Single parent families	9,236
Families with low income (< $42,000 pa)	12,191
Aged 70+	24,367
Widowed	10,234
Living alone	16,806
Unemployed	5,222
In need of assistance with core activities	9,484
Recently arrived (since 2008)	5,378
Not speaking English well	3,354
Households renting (at least one person Catholic)	23,993

Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Type of school attended by primary students (Broken Bay 2011)

Students	Catholic Primary	Government Primary	Other non-Govt Primary
Catholic	43.6	48.8	7.7
Non-Catholic (or N/S)	2.2	80.9	16.9
All primary students	15.2	70.8	14.0

N/S: Religion not stated.
Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Type of school attended by secondary students (Broken Bay 2011)

Students	Catholic Secondary	Government Secondary	Other non-Govt Secondary
Catholic	50.9	36.0	13.0
Non-Catholic (or N/S)	6.9	63.9	29.2
All secondary students	19.8	55.7	24.5

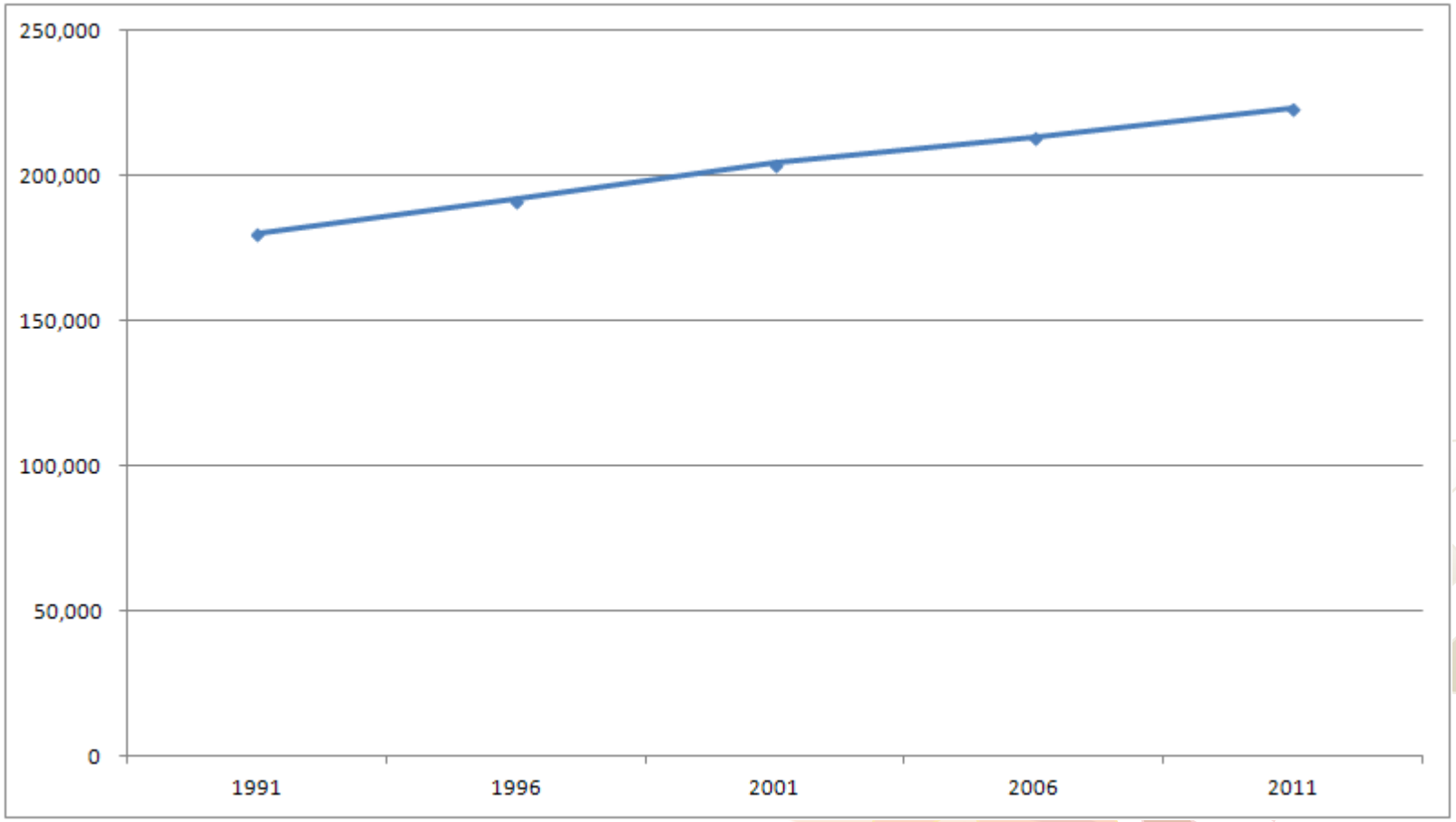
N/S: Religion not stated.
Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Percentage of non-Catholic students in Catholic school enrolments (Broken Bay 2011)

Percentage of Catholic primary enrolments	21.7
Percentage of Catholic secondary enrolments	28.6
Percentage of all Catholic school enrolments	24.9

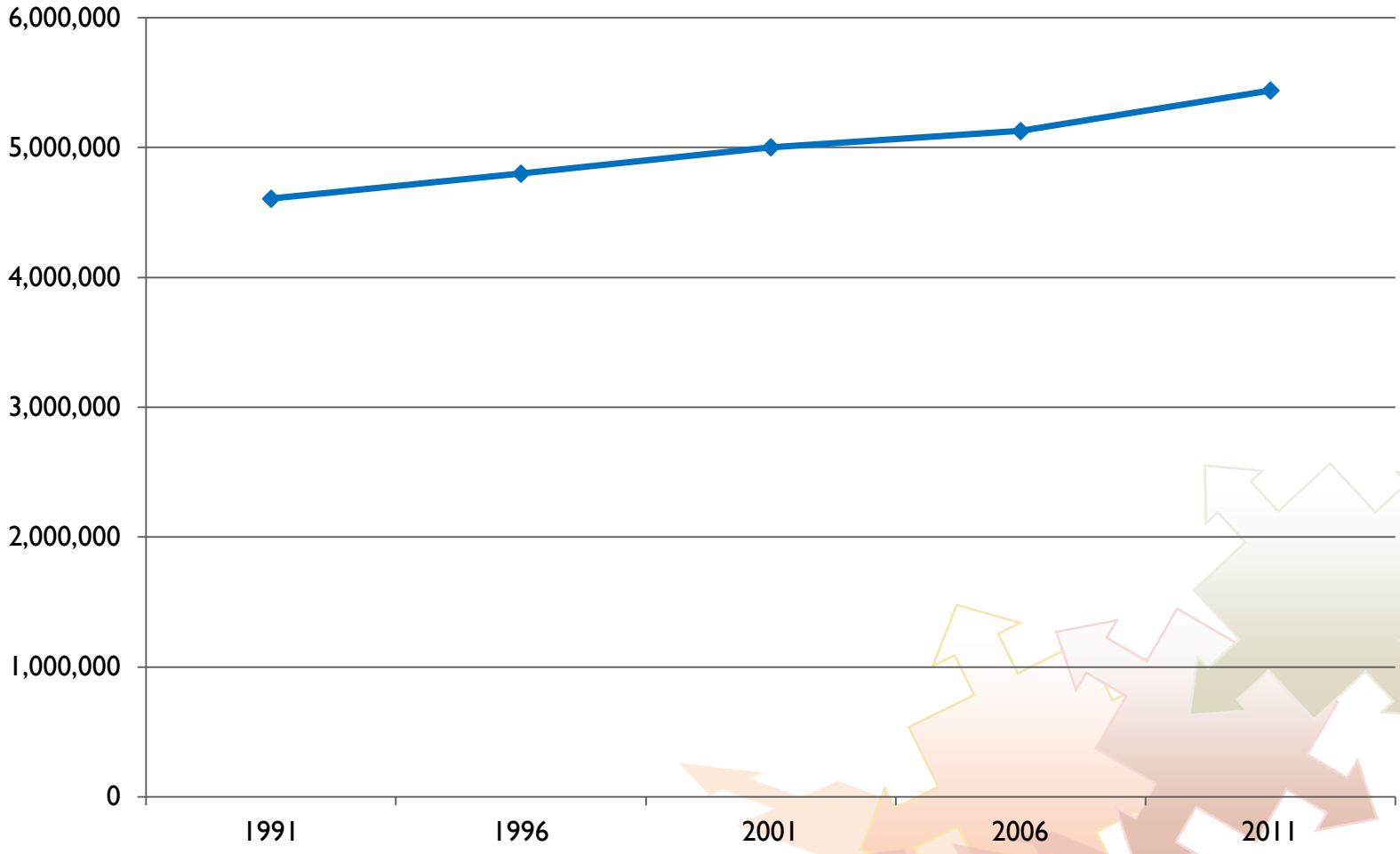
Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Catholic population growth, 1991 – 2011
(Diocese of Broken Bay)



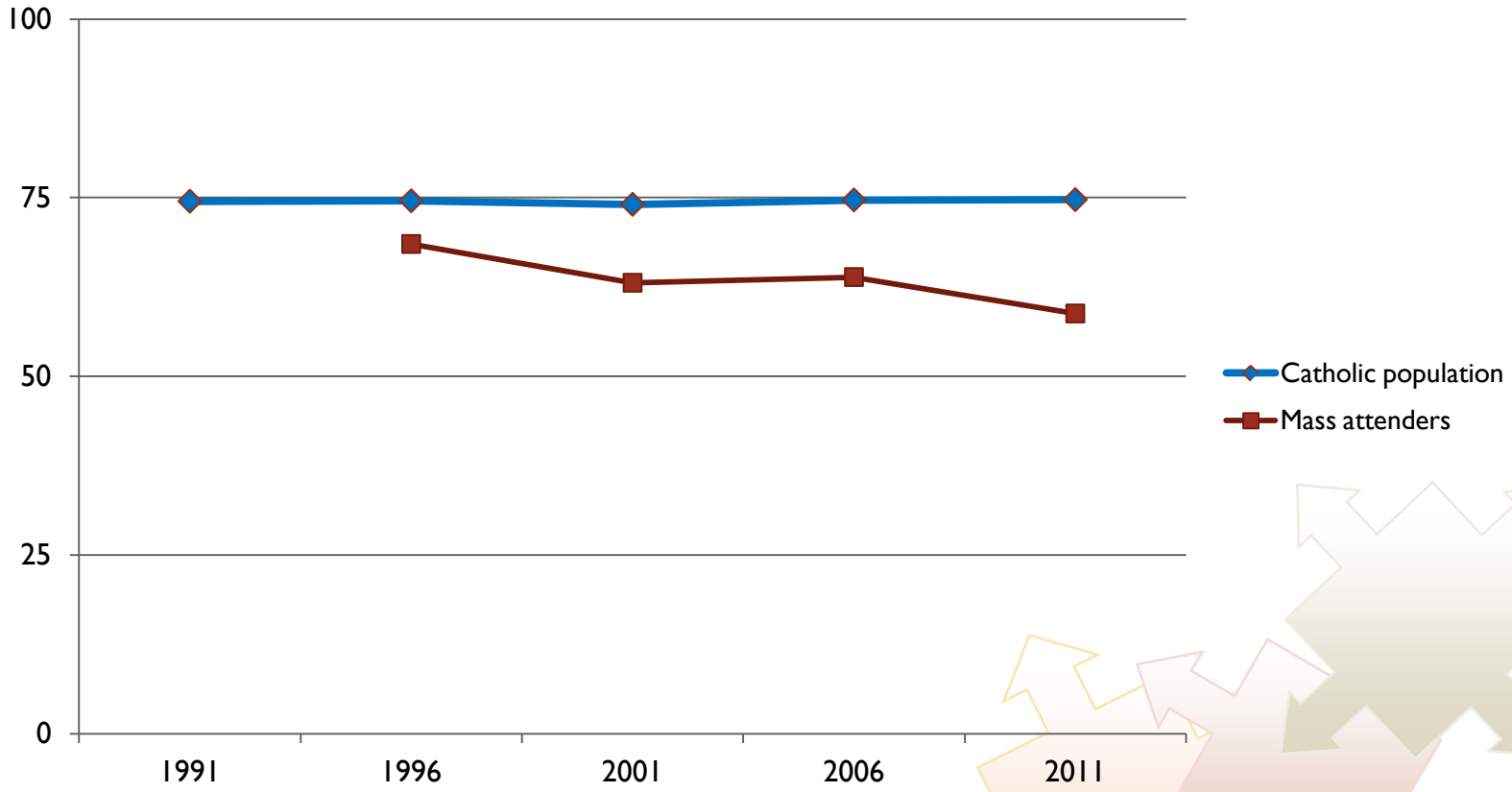
Source: ABS Censuses, 1991 to 2011 – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Catholic population growth, 1991 – 2011 (Australia)



Source: ABS Censuses, 1991 to 2011 – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Australian-born as percentage of Catholic population & Mass attenders, 1991 – 2011 (Australia)



Source: ABS Censuses, 1991 to 2011 – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.

Disidentification

Across all age groups, more than 20,000 Australians *every year* are ceasing to identify as Catholics.

More than half of these occurred among people aged 20-29 in 2011.

- Dixon and Reid, “The Contemporary Catholic Community: A View from the 2011 Census”, *The Australasian Catholic Record*, April 2013

Catholic communities

Mass attending Catholics

Mass attendance, 2001 – 2011 (Diocese of Broken Bay)

2001	29,838	14.6%
2006	29,502	13.8%
2011	25,532	11.4%

Source: ACBC National Count of Attendance 2011, 2006 & 2001.

Change in Mass attendances, 2001- 2011 (Broken Bay Diocese)

Between 2001 and 2011 (a 10-year period), Mass attendances fell by **14 per cent overall.**

In the same period, the number of Australian-born attenders fell from around 23,900 to 15,300 - or a drop of **36 per cent**!

A multicultural worshipping community (Broken Bay Diocese)

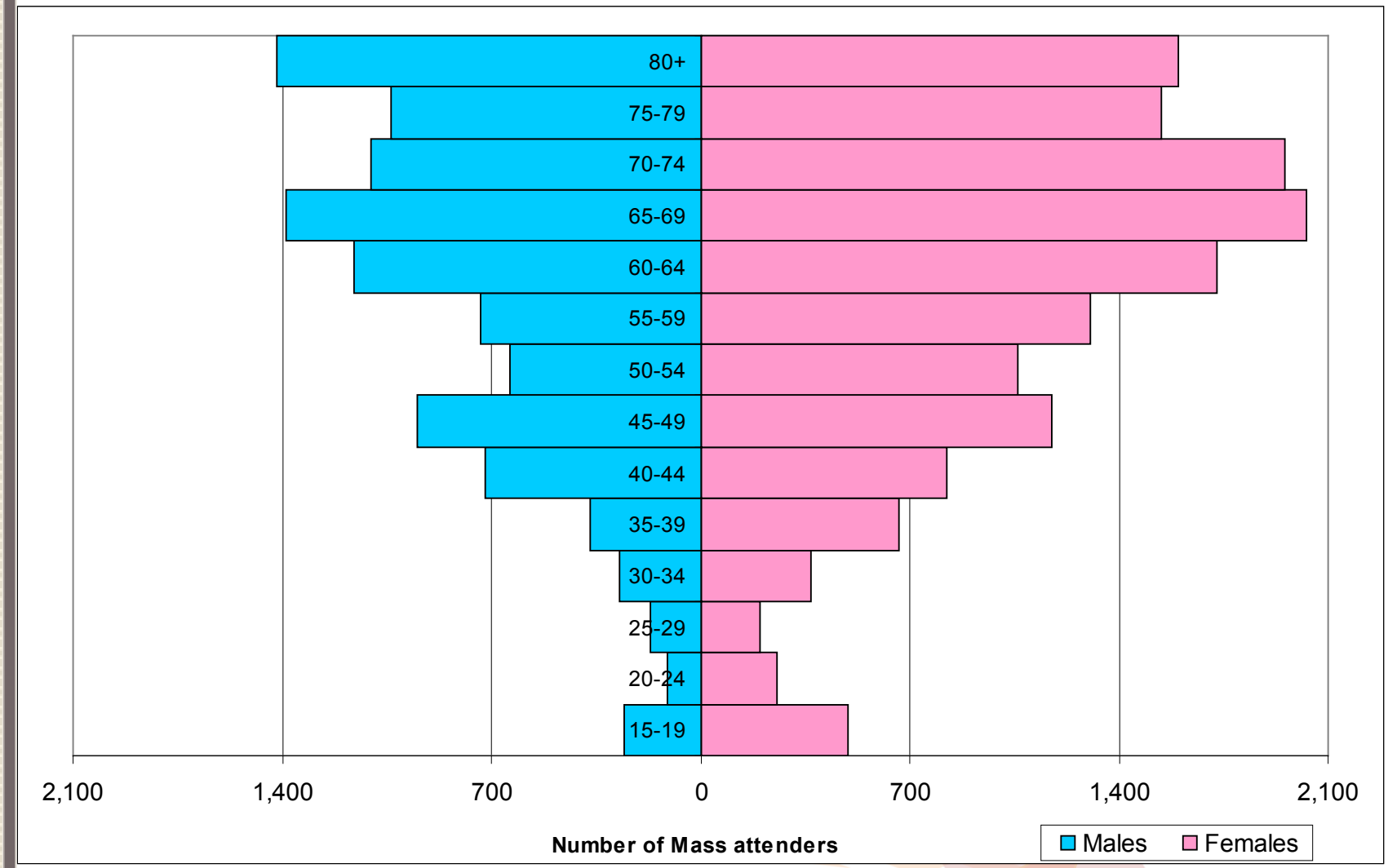
Major countries of birth of Mass attenders (other than Australia)

Non-English speaking	English speaking
Philippines	Great Britain
India / Sri Lanka	Ireland (inc. Northern Ireland)
Korea	New Zealand
Italy	South Africa
China / Hong Kong	
Northern or Western Europe	
Malta	

Source of data: National Church Life Survey 2011.

Age – Sex profile 2011

Mass attenders aged 15 and over (Broken Bay)

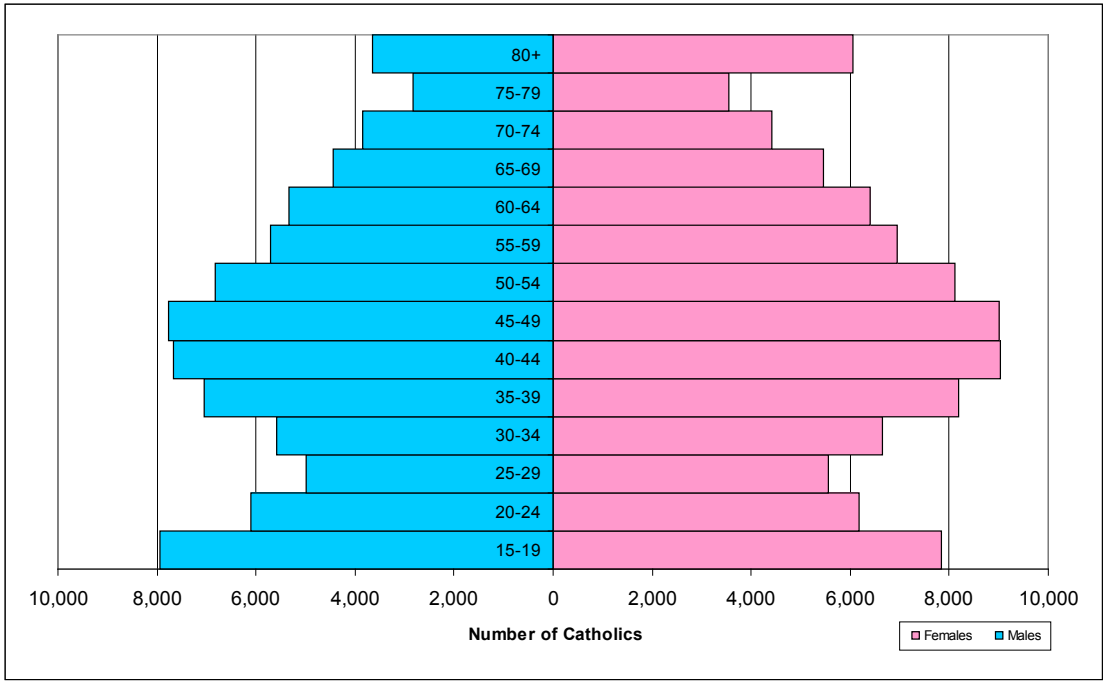


Source: ACBC National Count of Attendance 2011 & National Church Life Survey 2011.

All Catholics 2011 (Broken Bay)

(Aged 15+)

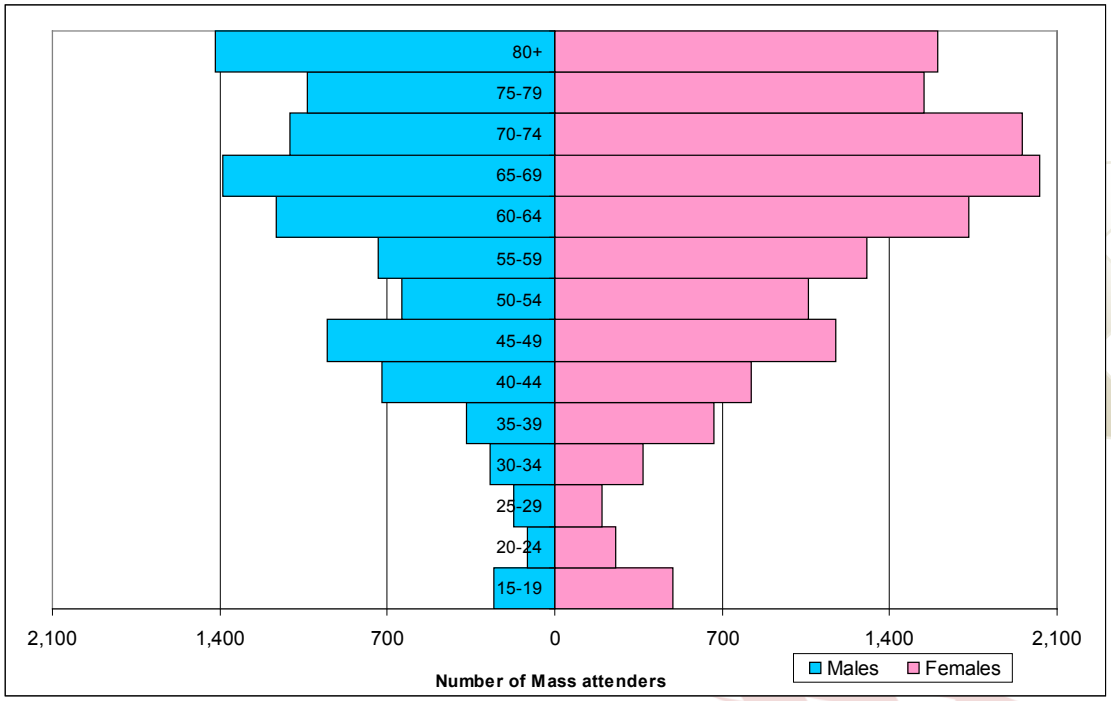
Source: ABS 2011 Census – data obtained as part of the National Catholic Census Project.



Mass attenders 2011 (Broken Bay)

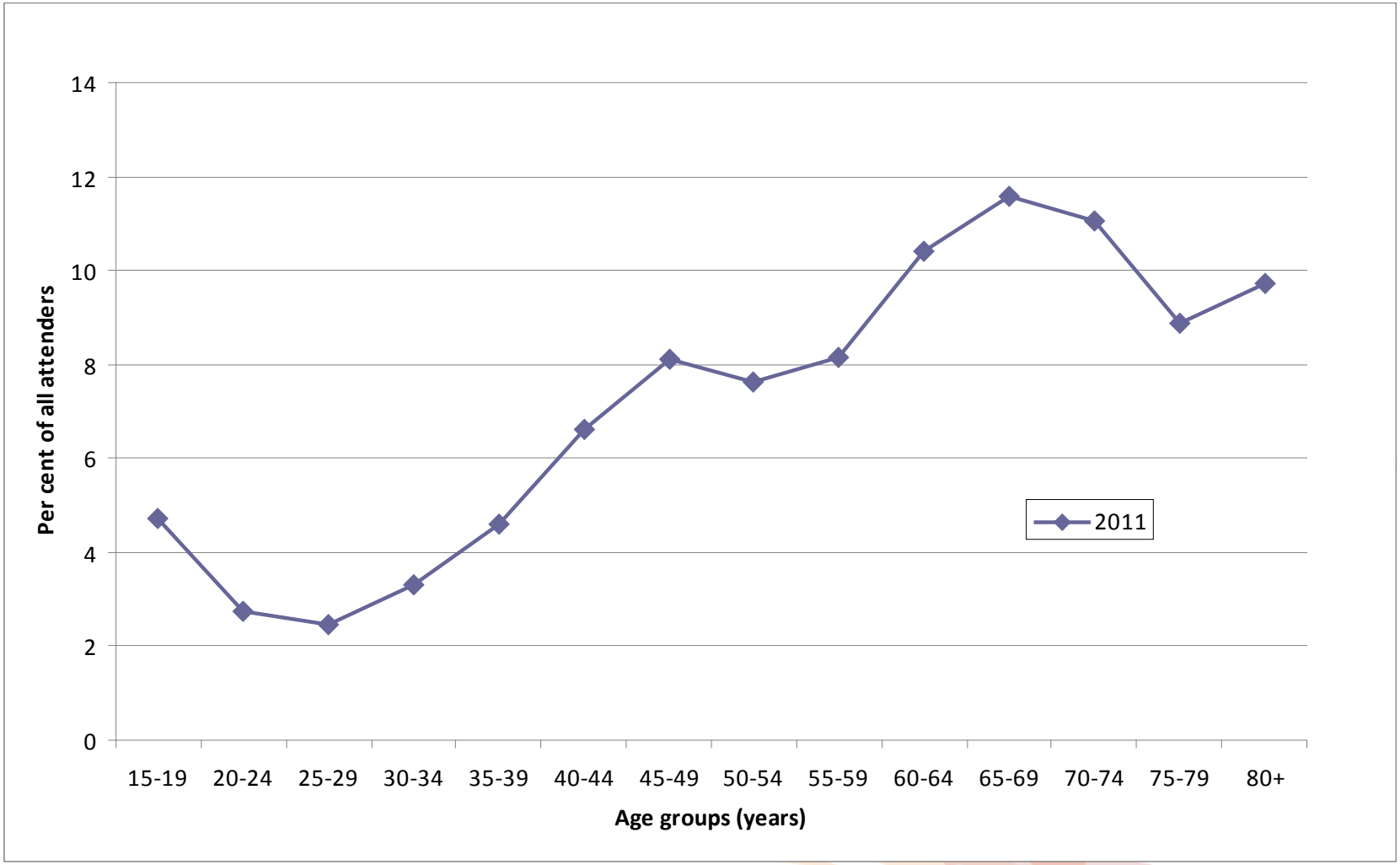
(Aged 15+)

Source: ACBC National Count of Attendance 2011 & National Church Life Survey 2011.



Age Profile of Mass Attenders

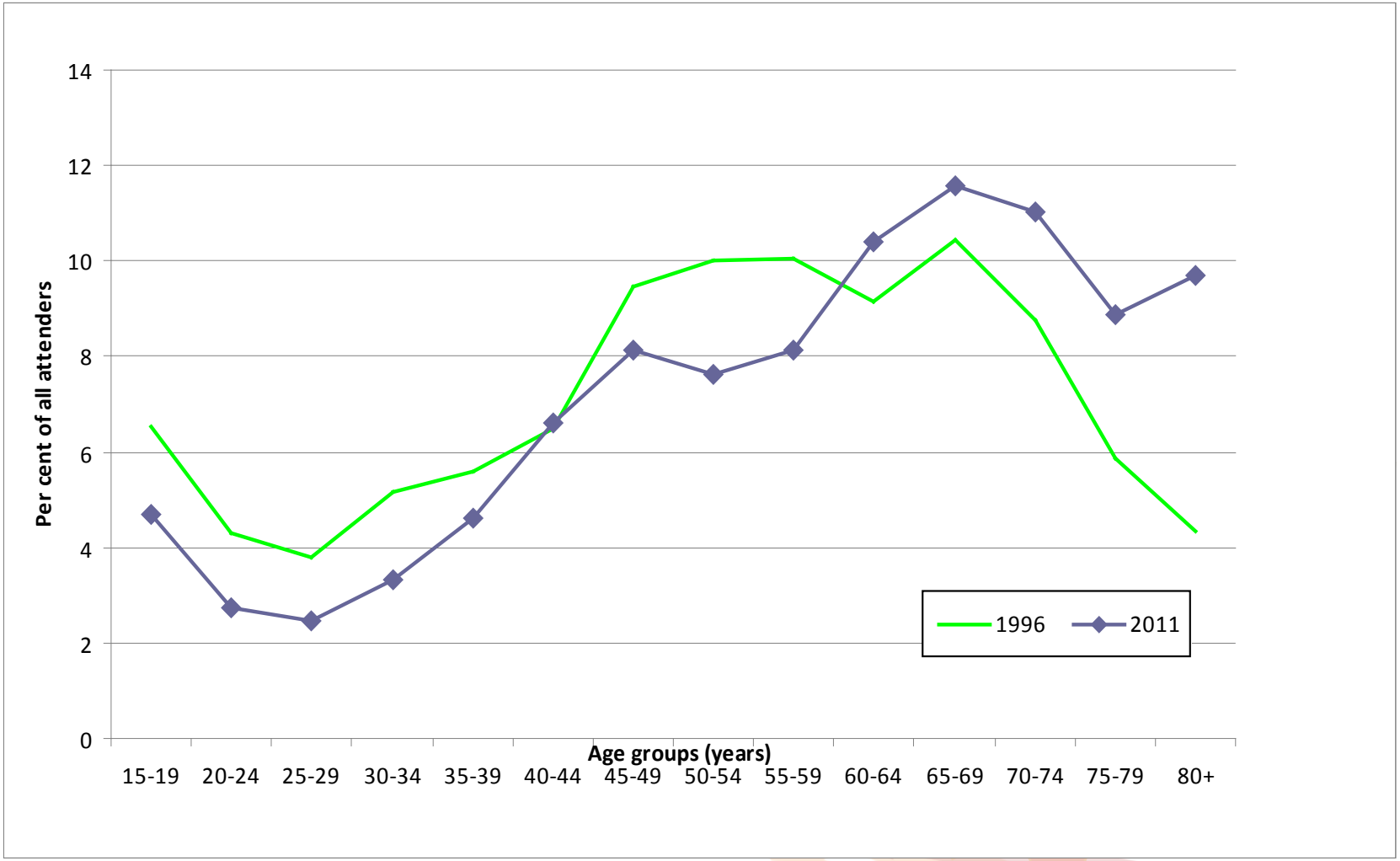
2011 (Broken Bay Diocese)



Source: National Church Life Survey 2011

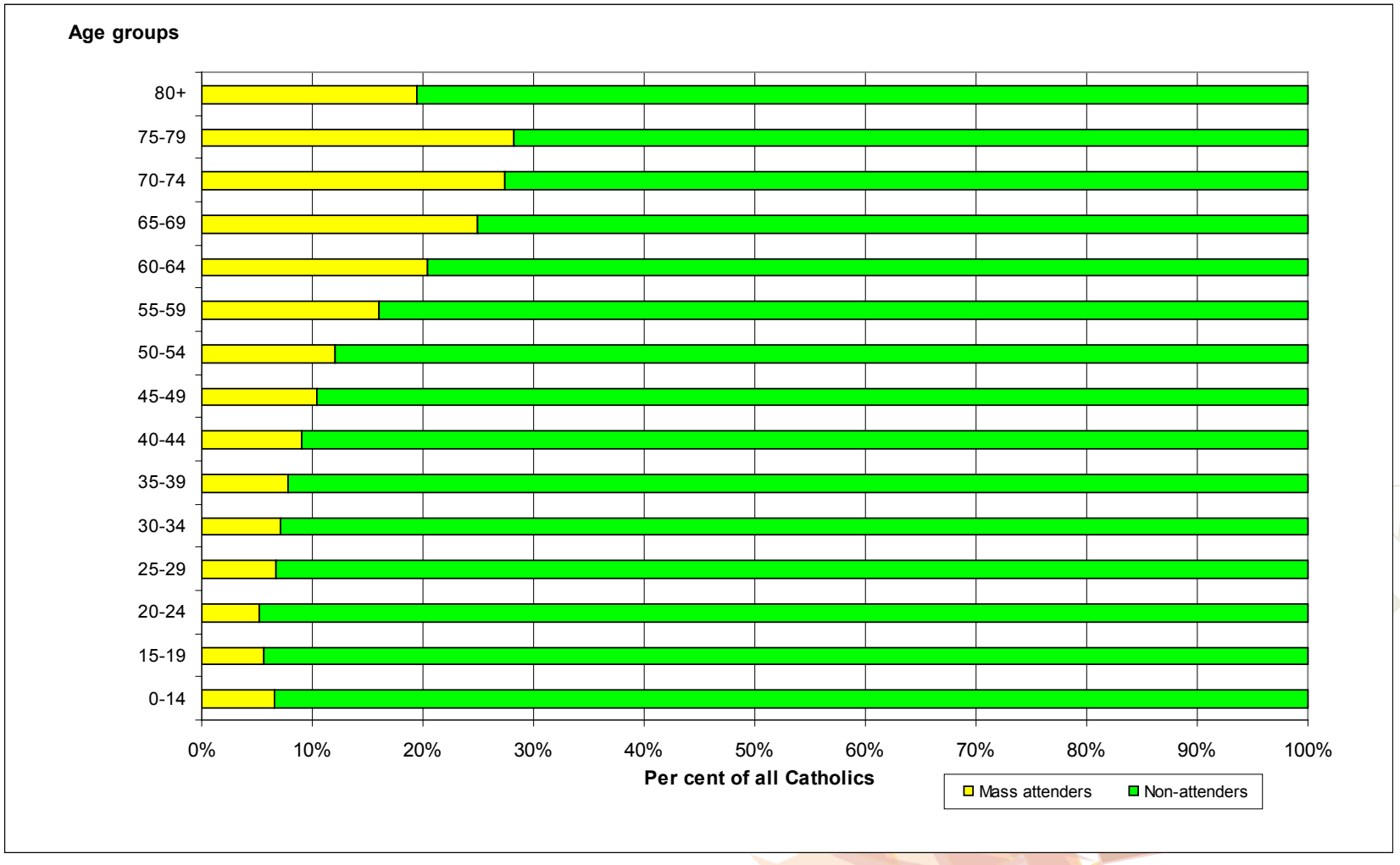
Age Profile of Mass Attenders

1996 & 2011 (Broken Bay Diocese)



Source: Catholic Church Life Survey 1996 and National Church Life Survey & 2011

Attendance rates by age 2011 (Broken Bay Diocese)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics - 2011 Census; 2011 National Church Life Survey & 2011 National Count of Attendance.

What do Mass attenders* believe?

The beliefs of Catholics in a time of cultural change:

A case study of data from the National Church Life Survey

* Catholics only

Beliefs and moral attitudes

- Have the cultural changes of the last fifty years or so influenced the way that Australia's most active Catholics think about key Catholic beliefs and moral teachings?

Beliefs and moral attitudes

A shift in the culture

- The shift from rational and traditional authority to experiential authority is critical for understanding contemporary cultural phenomena, including the profound change that has occurred in religious expressions in Australia and Western civilisation.

- Dr Gerald Rose

Beliefs and moral attitudes

As a result of the 'experiential shift' in the culture:

- '… ultimate authority is to be found in the individual's experiences, senses and feelings' (Bouma).
- Unless we take that experiential shift seriously, our efforts in evangelisation, catechesis and pastoral care are likely to lack effectiveness.

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Trinity	%
There is one God, three divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit	84
God exists, and is a divine person, but not Father, Son and Holy Spirit	3
God is the name we give to a higher power in the universe, the mysterious and creative source of life	7
We and the universe are in God, part of God, identified with God	3
God is not 'out there', but is found only within each person	2
We cannot know for sure if God exists	1
God does not exist	0

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Virginity of Mary	%
Mary gave birth to Jesus without having had sexual intercourse	75
Mary's virginity is not meant to be taken literally	25

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Eucharist: the consecrated bread and wine …	%
… truly become the sacred Body and Blood of Christ	90
… remain bread and wine	10

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Resurrection	%
Christ was raised by God's power from death to life – really, bodily, physically	71
Christ's rose from the dead, not literally, but in the Christian community's faith in God's power to give life	24
Christ did not rise in any sense	0
Don't know	4

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Abortion	%
Always morally wrong	51
Justified only in extreme circumstances (eg,	35
Justified widely but not always	13
Never wrong	1

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Pre-marital sex	%
Always morally wrong	42
Not wrong if in a committed relationship	51
Never wrong	8

Beliefs and moral attitudes

What predicts an orthodox response?

- Age
- Birthplace (especially the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka, and other non-Western countries)

But not

- Sex
- Level of education

Beliefs and moral attitudes

Change, 1996 - 2011

Trinity	↑
Virginity of Mary	↑
Transubstantiation	↑
Resurrection	↓
Abortion	↓
Pre-marital sex	↓

Beliefs and moral attitudes

- Increases have come at a cost. Across Australia:

Up to 27,000 Baby Boomers stopped attending Mass between 1996 and 2006.

In 1996, there were about 136,000 Catholics aged 15-34 at Mass every weekend.

In 2011, the number in that age group had dropped to about 83,000.

Does Mass attendance matter?

Affiliation, attendance and belief

A sample question from the ISSP

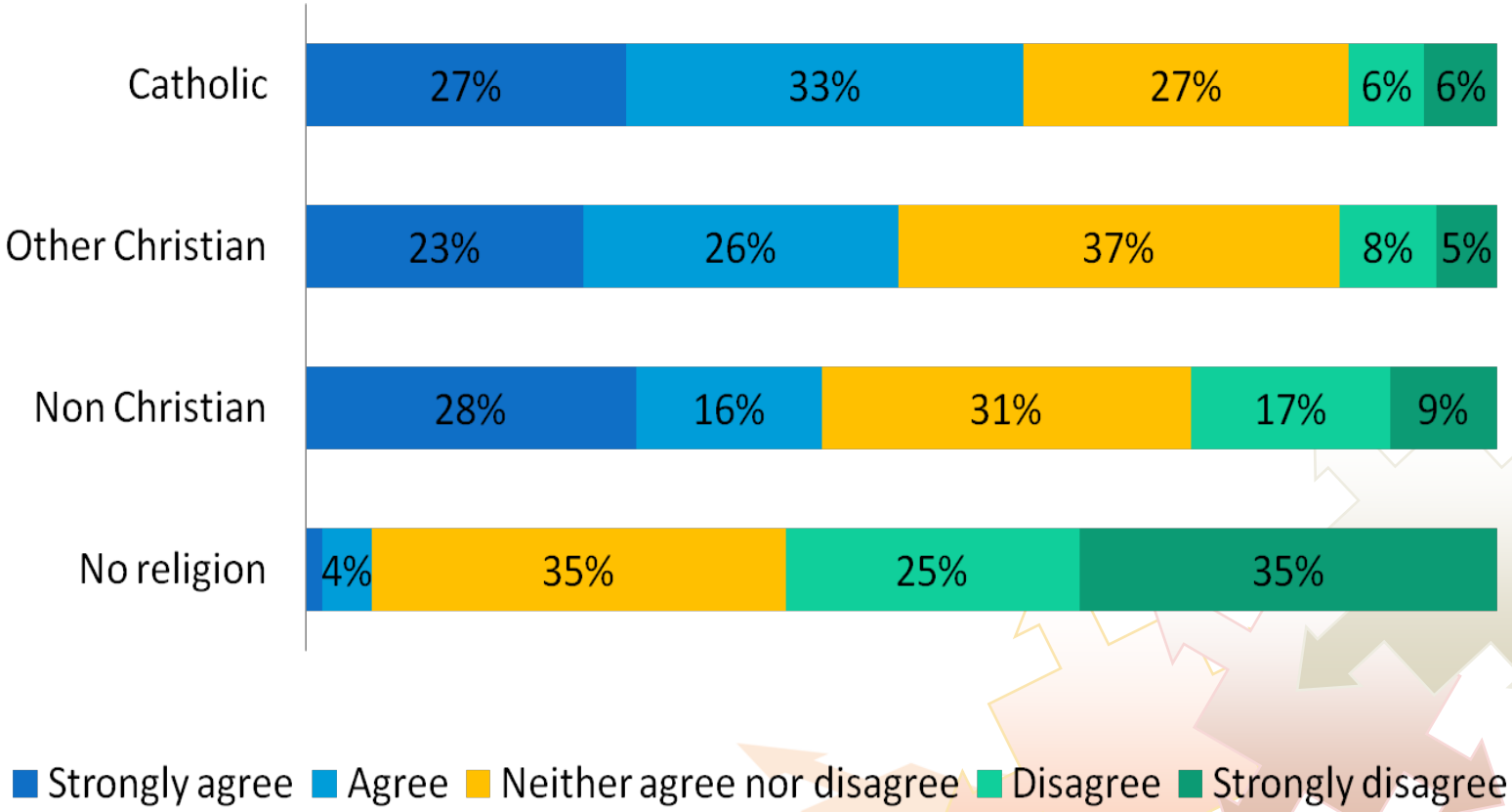
"Jesus' Resurrection from the dead was an actual historical event"

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) http://www.issp.org

Jesus' Resurrection from the dead was an actual historical event

By religion

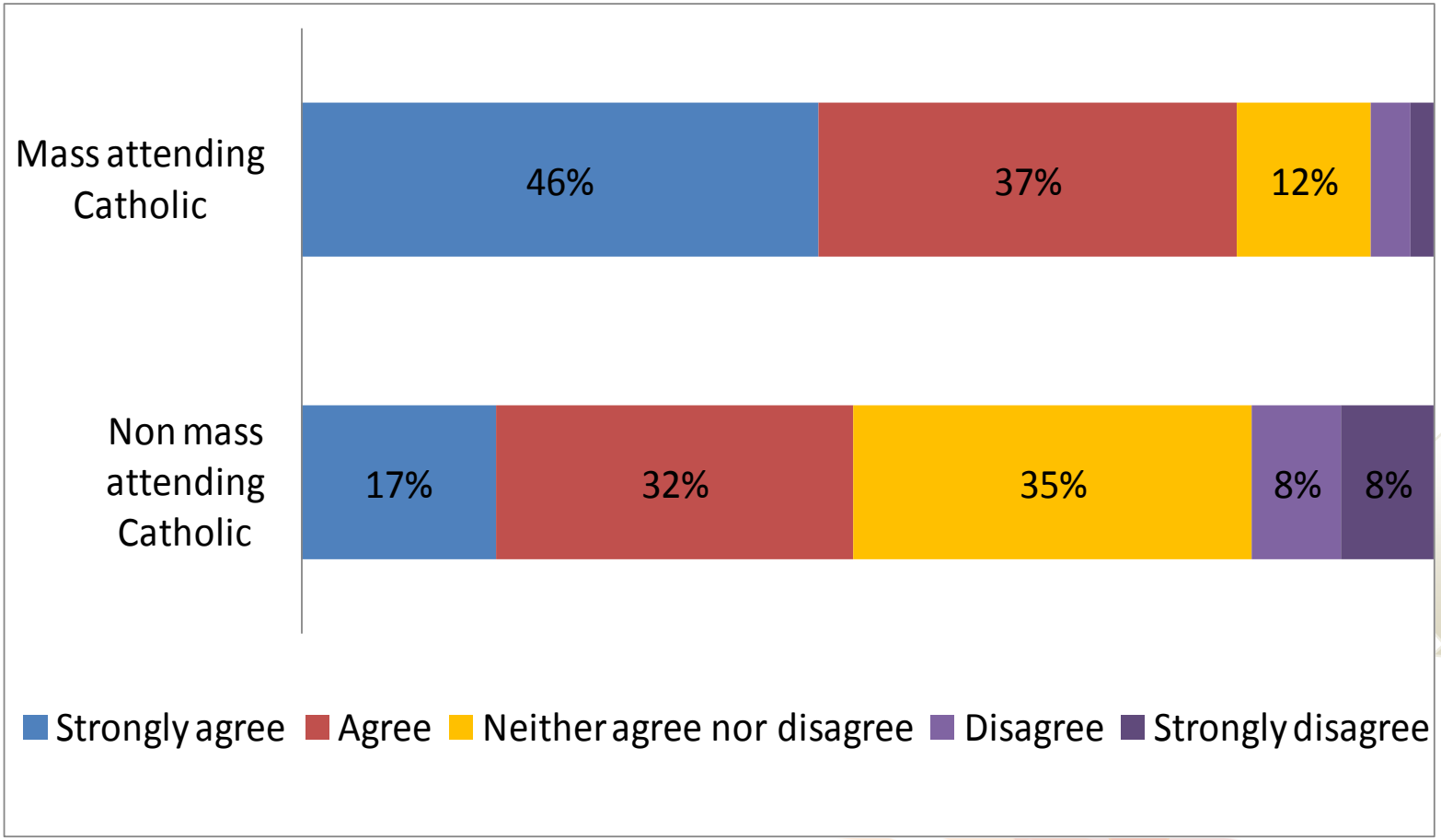


Note: data labels for 4% or less not shown

base n = 1559; total n = 1718; 159 missing; effective sample size = 670 (43%)

Jesus' Resurrection from the dead was an actual historical event

Catholics, by Mass attendance

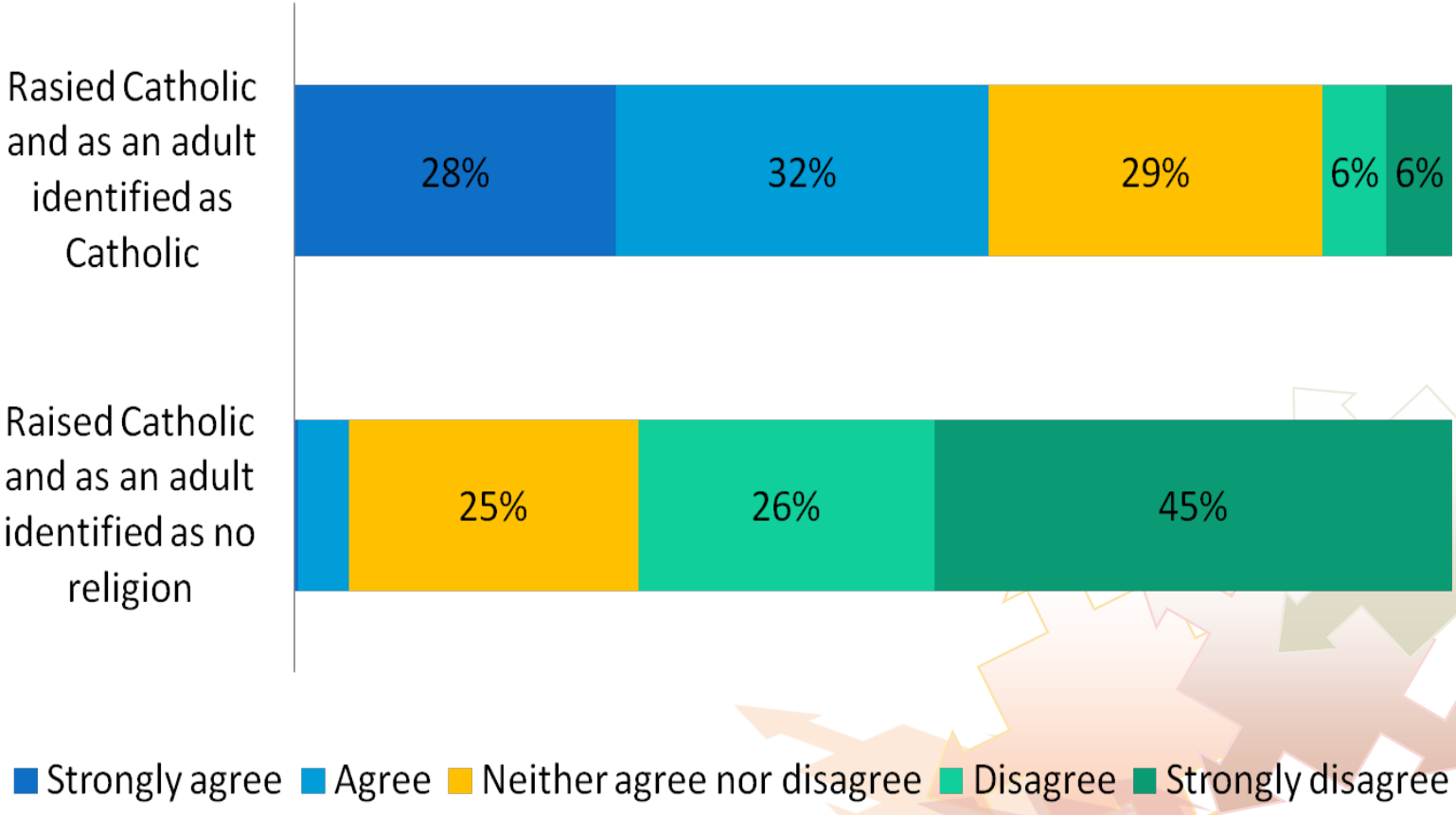


Mass attending Catholic = attending at least once a month.

base n = 312; total n = 335; 23 missing; effective sample size = 137 (44%); 81% filtered out

Jesus' Resurrection from the dead was an actual historical event

People raised as Catholics

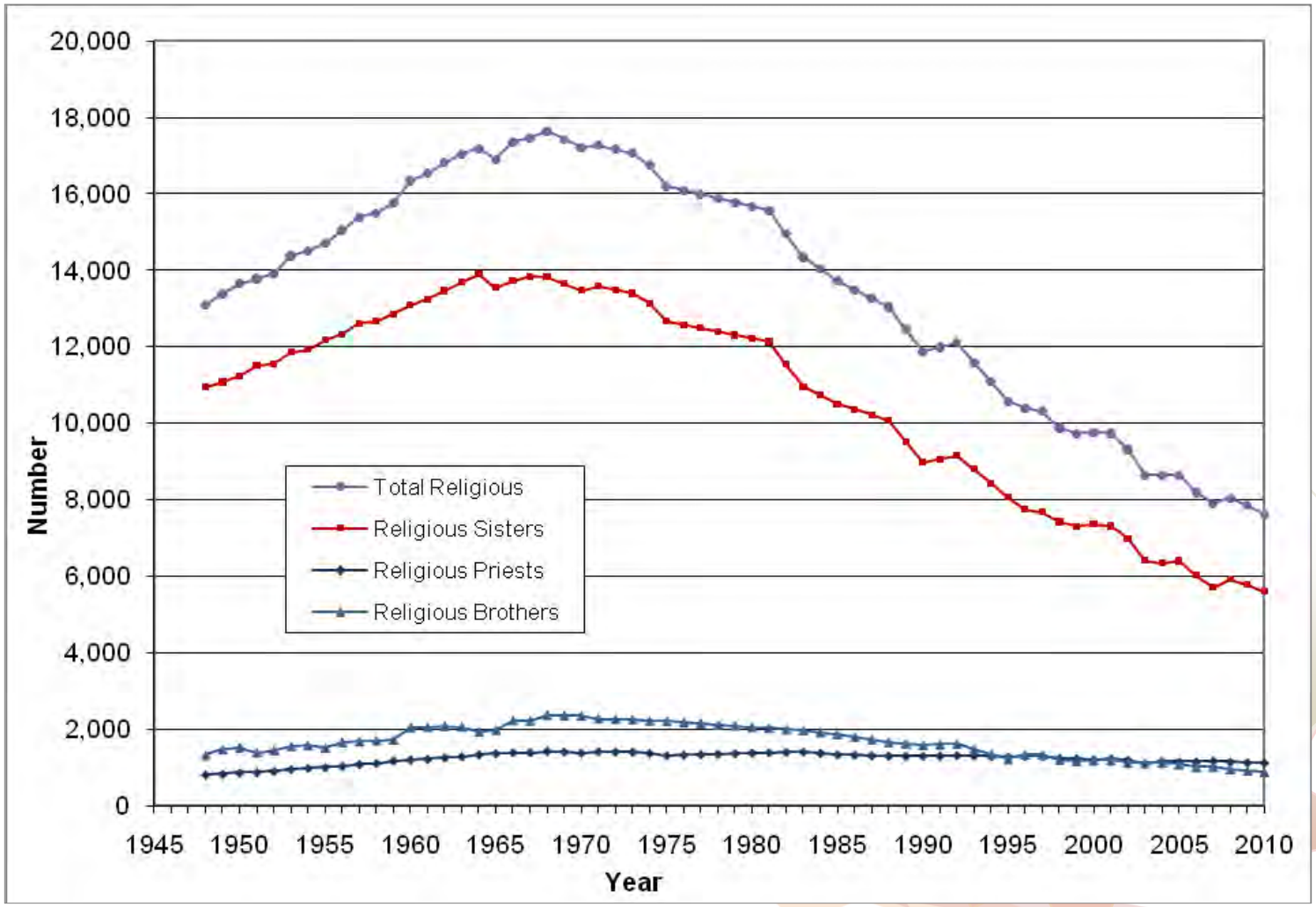


base n = 463; total n = 1718; 1255 missing; effective sample size = 281 (61%)

Catholic communities

Catholic clergy and religious

Australia's religious: 1948 - 2010



Source: *The official directory of the Catholic Church in Australia – annual or biennial editions from 1948 to 2010.*

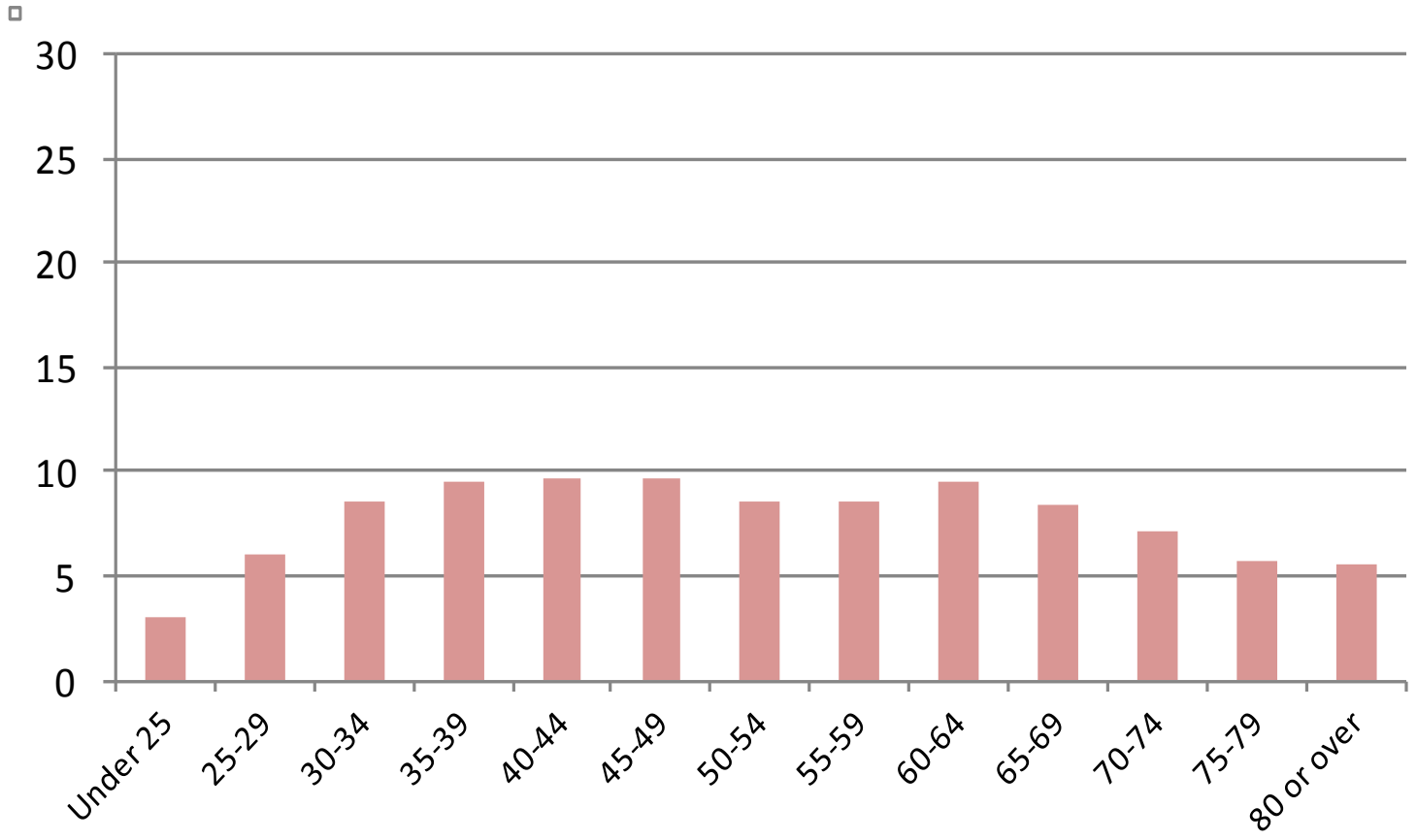
Number of priests & religious, 1966 & 2012

	1966 [1]	2012 [2]
Diocesan priests	2,389	1,930
Religious order priests	1,397	1,174
Religious sisters	13,720	5,279
Religious brothers	2234	866
Permanent deacons	-	121

NB. In 2011, 27% of the diocesan priests (511) were retired.

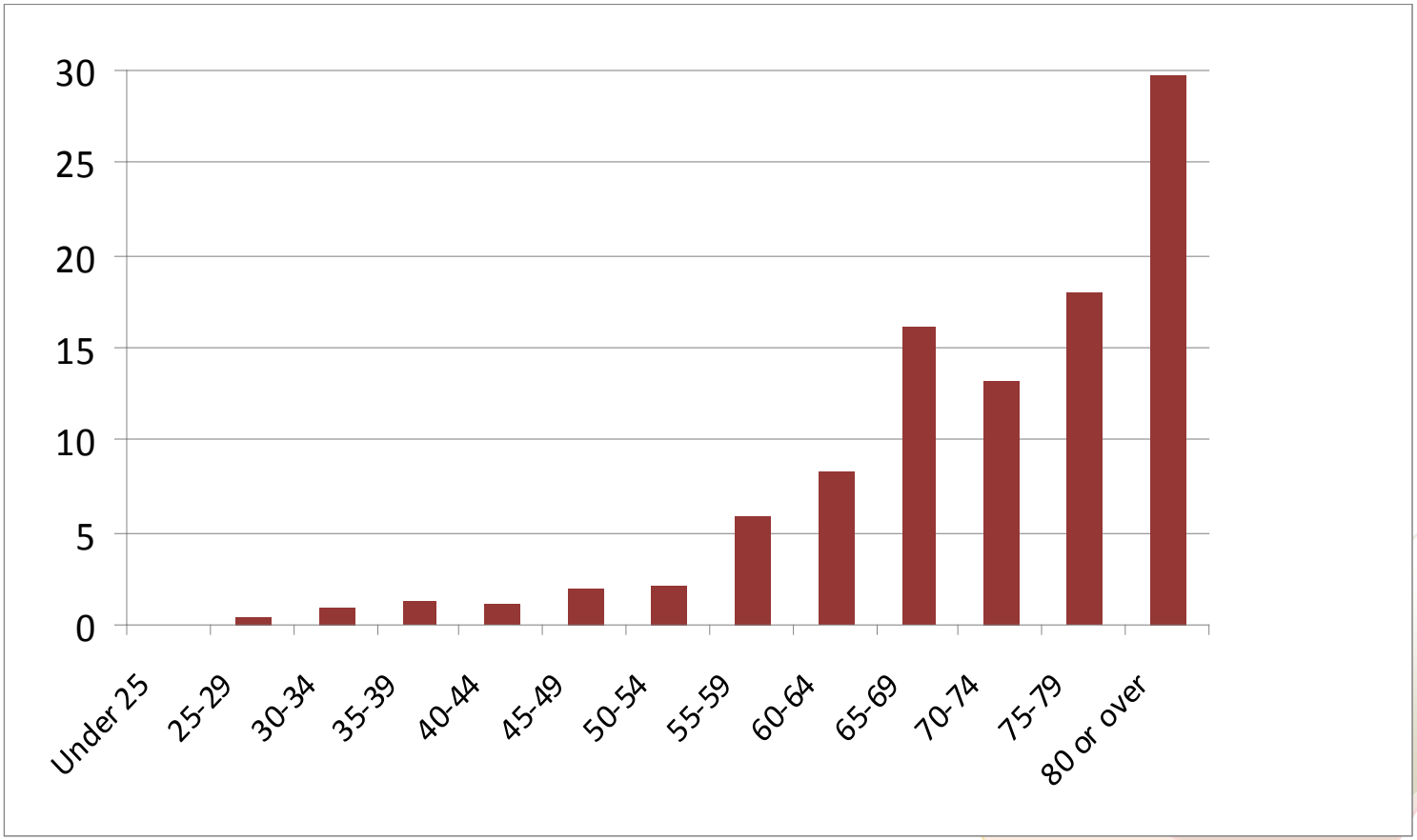
[1] *The official year book of the Catholic Church of Australia, New Zealand and Oceania 1966-1967*
[2] *The official directory of the Catholic Church in Australia July 2012 – June 2013*

Religious sisters: age profile 1976



Source: See I am doing a new thing

Religious sisters: age profile 2009



Source: See I am doing a new thing

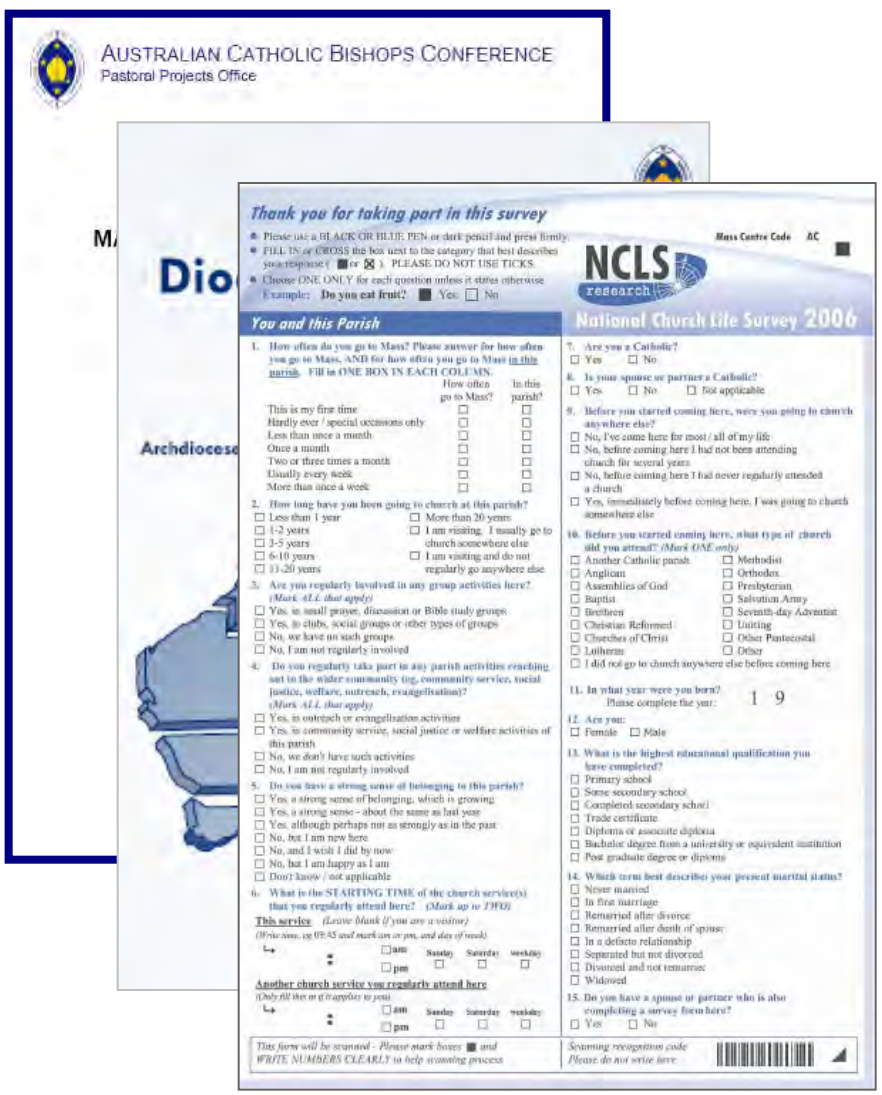
And a final word from Pope Francis

"The defining aspect of this change of epoch is that things are no longer in their place. Our previous ways of explaining the world and relationships, good and bad, no longer appear to work. The way in which we locate ourselves in history has changed. Things we thought would never happen, or that we never thought we would see, we are experiencing now, and we dare not even imagine the future. That which appeared normal to us – family, the Church, society and the world – will probably no longer seem that way. We cannot simply wait for what we are experiencing to pass, under the illusion that things will return to being how they were before".

Jorge Mario Bergoglio
Archbishop of Buenos Aires
(Pope Francis)

The Pastoral Research Office

What we do


AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE
Pastoral Projects Office
Thank you for taking part in this survey
NCLS research
National Church Life Survey 2006
You and this Parish

SEE. I AM
ACBC Pastoral Research Office
Building Stronger Parishes
December 2011
PRELIMINARY REPORT
In this report you will find....
How one new gadget could revive your parish...
Ways to get your parish to work as a team...
Ideas to connect with ALL the Catholics in your area...
and much more....
Background to the project
Inside this report:
Particular emphasis was given to stories of vitality and hope that bring life to their communities
Page 1

PARISH SOCIAL PROFILE

BASED ON THE 2011 AUSTRALIAN CENSUS

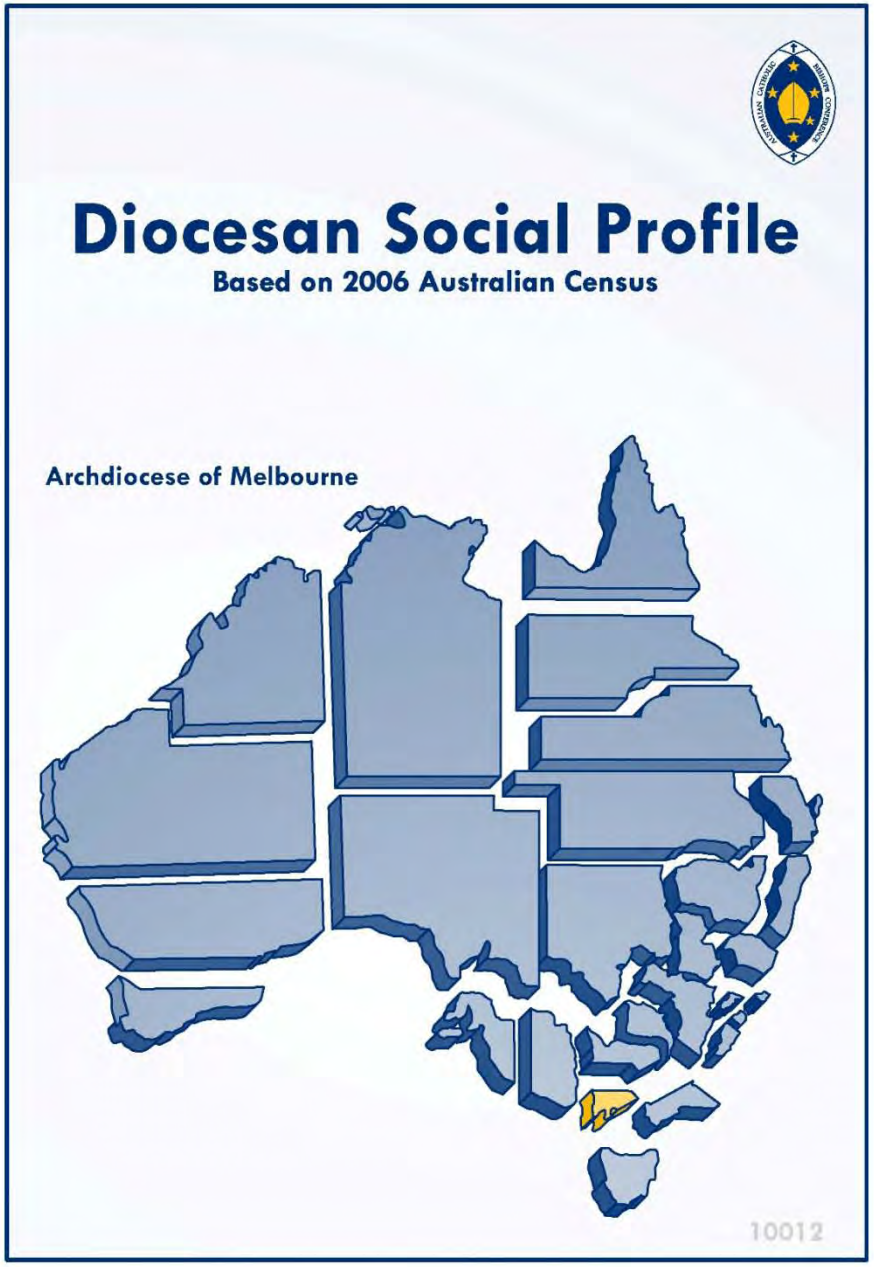
Annandale Parish
Archdiocese of Sydney
Census ID: 10001

Parish Social Profiles

Based on the 2011 Census

All Parish Social Profiles available soon at:

www.pro.catholic.org.au

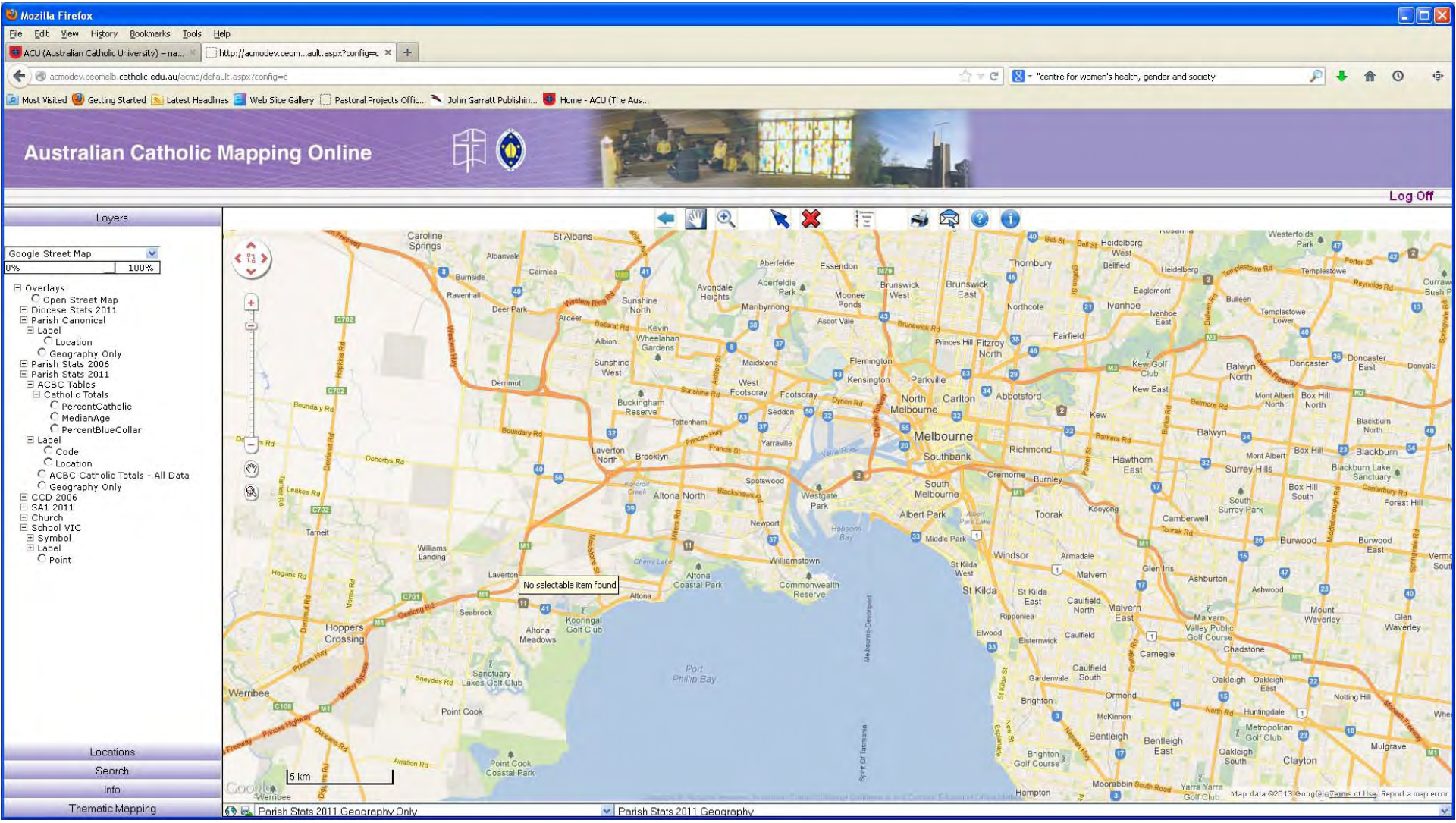


Diocesan Social Profiles

Based on the 2011 Census

All Diocesan Social Profiles are available at:

www.pro.catholic.org.au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Map data ©2013 Google
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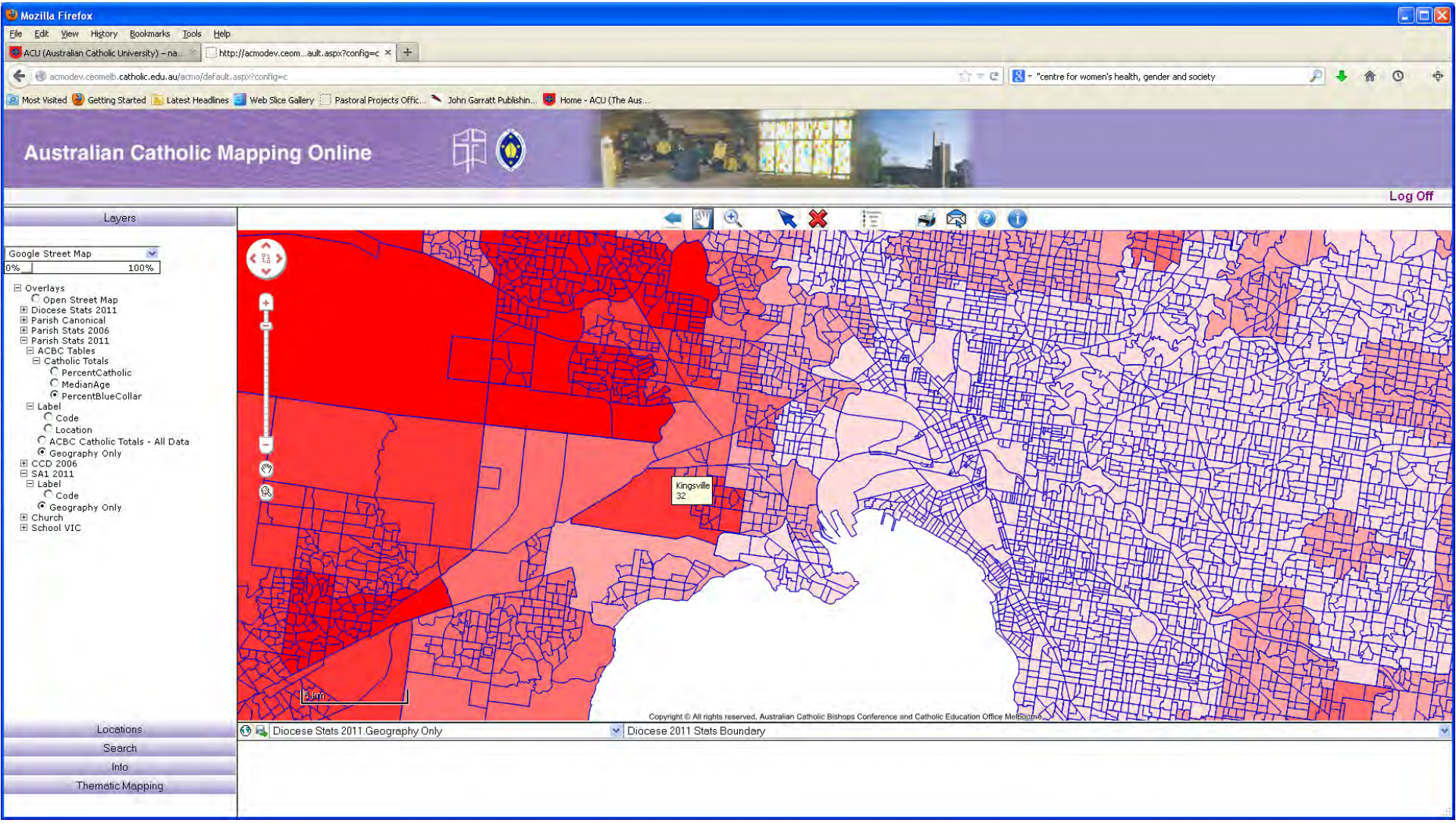
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Parish Canonical
Parish Stats 2006
Parish Stats 2011
ACBC Tables
Catholic Totals
PercentCatholic
MedianAge
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Location
ACBC Catholic Totals - All Data
Geography Only
CCD 2006
SA1 2011
Label
Code
Geography Only
Church
School VIC
Kingsville
32
2 km
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Diocese Stats 2011.Geography Only
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Thematic Mapping

If you want to know more …

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

Pastoral Research Office

Pastoral Research Online

April 2013

Issue 1

Welcome to Pastoral Research Online

We are pleased to bring you the first edition of *Pastoral Research Online*.

It replaces our weekly *E-News Bulletin* which ran for 21 issues from August 2012 until March this year, and served as a means of communicating newly available data from the 2011 Australian Census and the 2011 National Church Life Survey to the Catholic community in Australia.

Pastoral Research Online will be published monthly and will normally be four pages in length, although that might be extended from time to time for special reports. Our aim is to circulate it by email on the second Thursday of each month, and to have it available on our website within a few days after that.

The *E-News Bulletin* concentrated on data delivery alone. There was little commentary and no interpretation. The new format allows us to include a little more discussion about the meaning and implications of the data.

Most editions of *Pastoral Research Online* will focus on results from one particular project. This week, by way of introduction, we will say a little about each of our major projects. You will hear more about each of them in the months to come.

We hope you will enjoy *Pastoral Research Online* and find it informative for the work that you do.

In this edition...

In this first edition of *Pastoral Research Online*, we provide very brief reports or updates of the following projects:

- Building Stronger Parishes
- The International Social Survey Programme 2009
- National Church Life Survey 2011
- National Catholic Census Project 2011
- Australian Catholic Mapping Online

WHAT'S NEW ON OUR SITE

National Catholic Census Project

We have produced a number of reports of 2011 data on the Catholic population. These reports are available for download at www.pro.catholic.org.au

And keep watching – more will be added in the coming weeks and months.

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