Multiculturalism in the Catholic Church in Australia



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ACMRO 6th National Conference

Brisbane, August 2019

NCPR
National Centre for Pastoral Research



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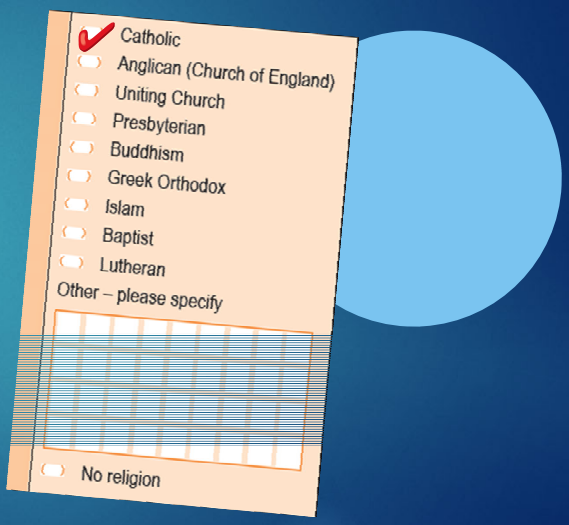
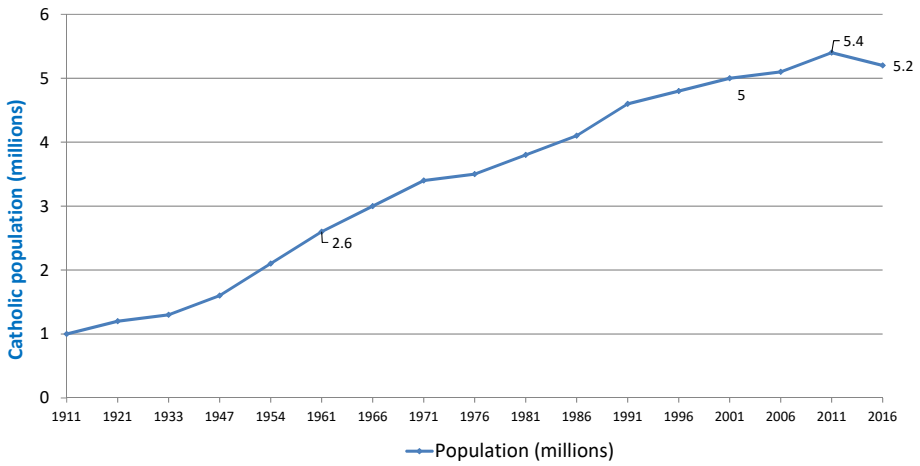
THE CATHOLIC POPULATION



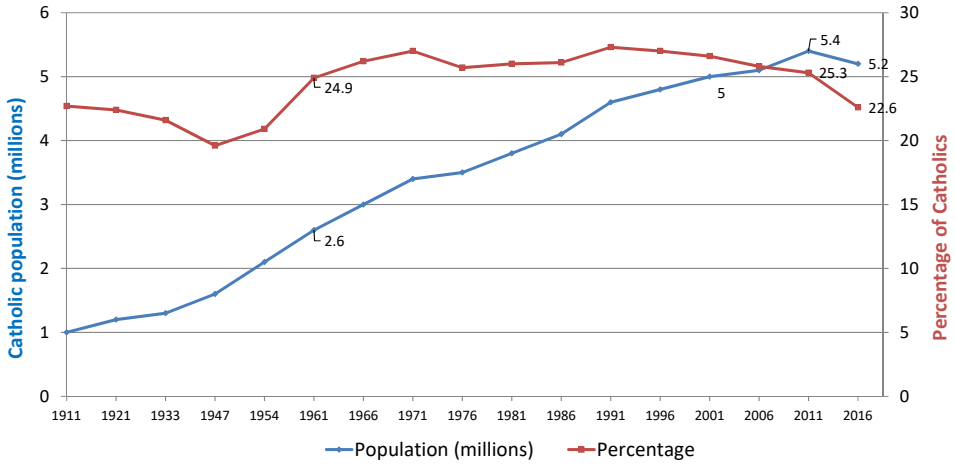


Catholic Population and Percentage Catholic 1911-2016



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics – Census of Population and Housing 1911-

Catholic Population and Percentage Catholic 1911-2016



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics – Census of Population and Housing 1911-

Australian Census

"Snapshot" taken on Tuesday 9 August 2016

NCPR National Centre for Pastoral Research

Total population: **23,401,892**

Catholic population: **5,291,834**

Per cent Catholic: **22.6%**

Median Age: **40 years**

***Source**: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2016.*

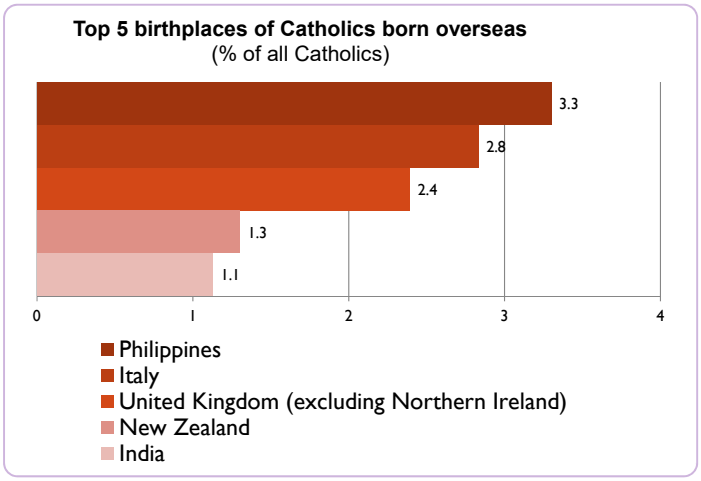
As compared to 20 years ago we are:

- **Decreasing in Catholic identification**
- **An aging population**
- **Better educated**
- **Increasingly multicultural**

Birthplace of Catholics born overseas, 2016

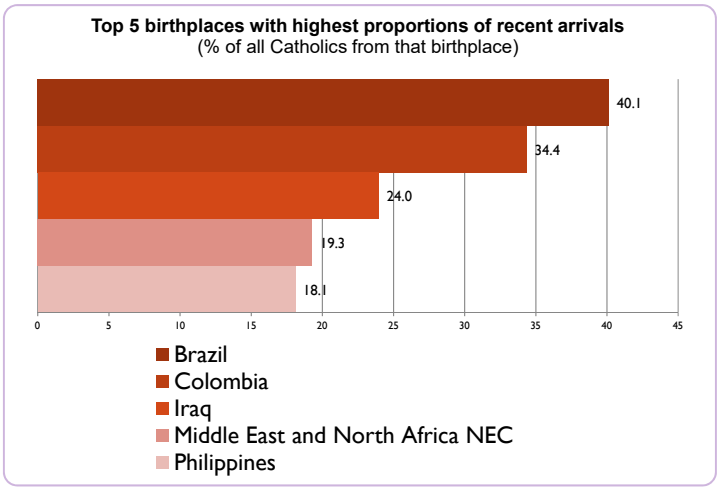
24.7%
Born overseas

19%
Born in a non-English speaking country (NESC)



***Source**: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2016*

Recent Arrivals (Arrived in Australia between 2013-2016)



***Source**: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2016*

In 2011:

- Ireland
- Korea
- India
- North America
- Central and South America

22%
Second generation Australians with at least one overseas born parent

Diocesan differences

Sydney, Perth
36%
Born overseas

Sydney
31% Born in a non-English speaking country

Sydney	• Italy	(24,932)
	• Philippines	(22,815)
	• Vietnam	(13,481)
Parramatta	• Philippines	(25,665)
	• Lebanon	(8,154)
	• Malta	(5,911)
Perth	• Philippines	(18,759)
	• Italy	(14,721)
	• India	(10,133)

Languages spoken at home by Catholics, 2016

20.4%
Speak a language other than English at home

Language	2016	*2011*
Italian	231,664	*267,002*
Filipino languages	145,635	*112,128*
Spanish	82,208	*75,781*
Arabic	68,952	*72,204*
Vietnamese	68,569	*63,887*
Croatian	49,546	*55,148*
Chinese languages	49,057	*46,709*
Polish	36,561	*41,025*
Portuguese	29,901	*24,714*
Maltese	29,828	*32,803*

***Source**: Australian Bureau of Statistics - Census of Population and Housing 2016*

Diocesan differences

Sydney	• Italian (38,932) • Arabic (28,834) • Spanish (23,293)
Darwin	• Indigenous languages (6,672) • Filipino languages (4,074) • Malayalam (766)
Melbourne	• Italian (89,262) • Filipino languages (27,657) • Vietnamese (24,670)

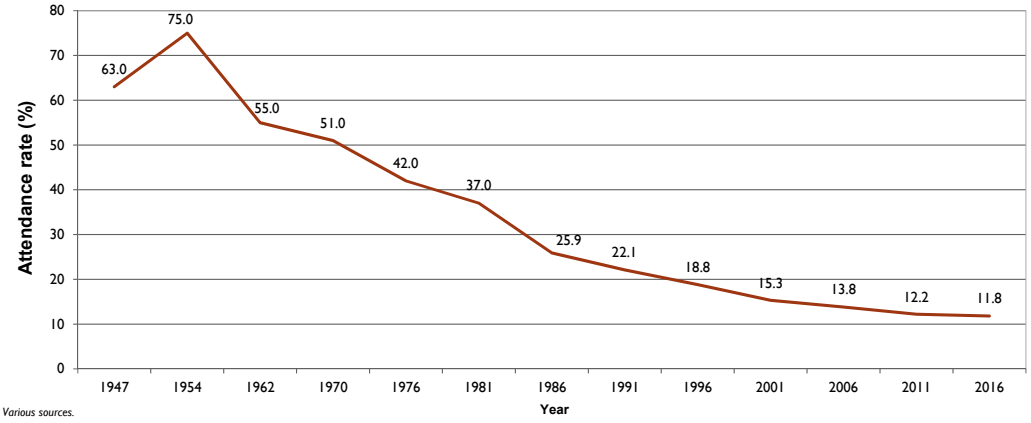
MASS ATTENDANCE IN AUSTRALIA



Source: *Shepparton Parish, Broken Bay*

Mass Attendance in Australia

Proportion of Catholics in Australia who attend Mass each weekend: 1947 - 2016

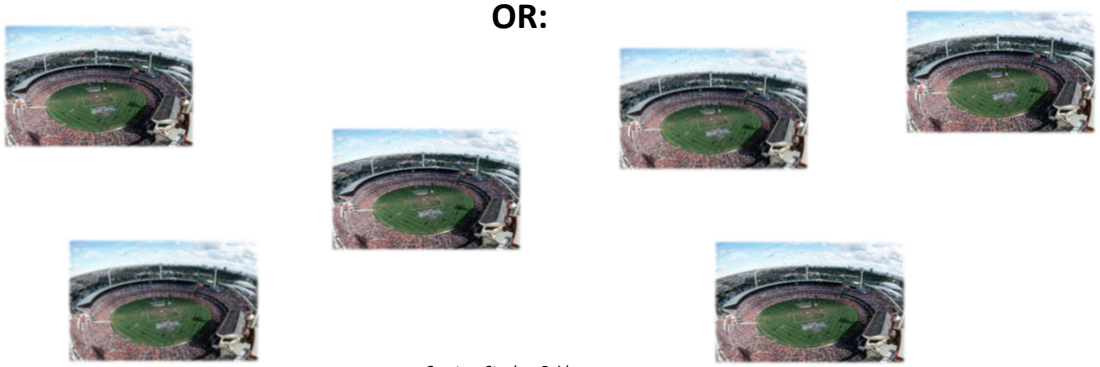


Various sources.

Mass Attendance in Australia

Total average typical attendance at weekend Mass in 2016 was 623,356

OR:



Courtesy Stephen Reid

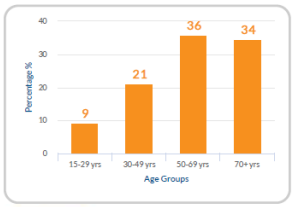
Mass Attenders, 2016

In comparison to the Australian Catholic population, in general, Mass attenders are ....

- Older
- Better educated
- More likely to be female
- More likely to be born overseas

2016 National Church Life Survey

The AVERAGE AGE of people is 59 years



51% of all people have a university degree



62% of all people are female and 38% are male

Mass Attenders, 2016

57% of all people were born in AUSTRALIA

43% were born overseas

33% speak a language other than ENGLISH at home



2016 National Church Life Survey

37%

Born in a non-English speaking country

Indians, Sri Lankans and people from the Philippines make up over 18 per cent – or about two in every eleven – of all Mass attenders

Mass Languages, 2016

Mass celebrated in one of more than 44 different languages other than English, including indigenous languages.

2016 NATIONAL COUNT OF ATTENDANCE

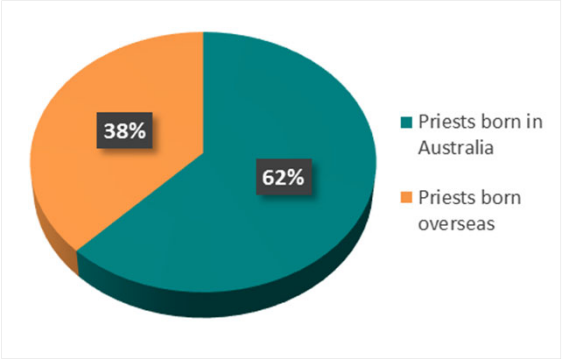


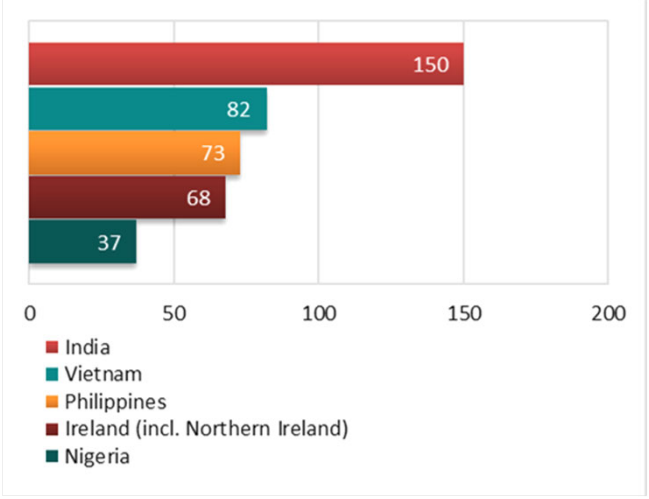
OVERSEAS-BORN PRIESTS



Source: The Catholic Weekly, 3 Aug 2019

Overseas-born priests in Australia, 2014





Total Priests – 1,884

Born Overseas – 711

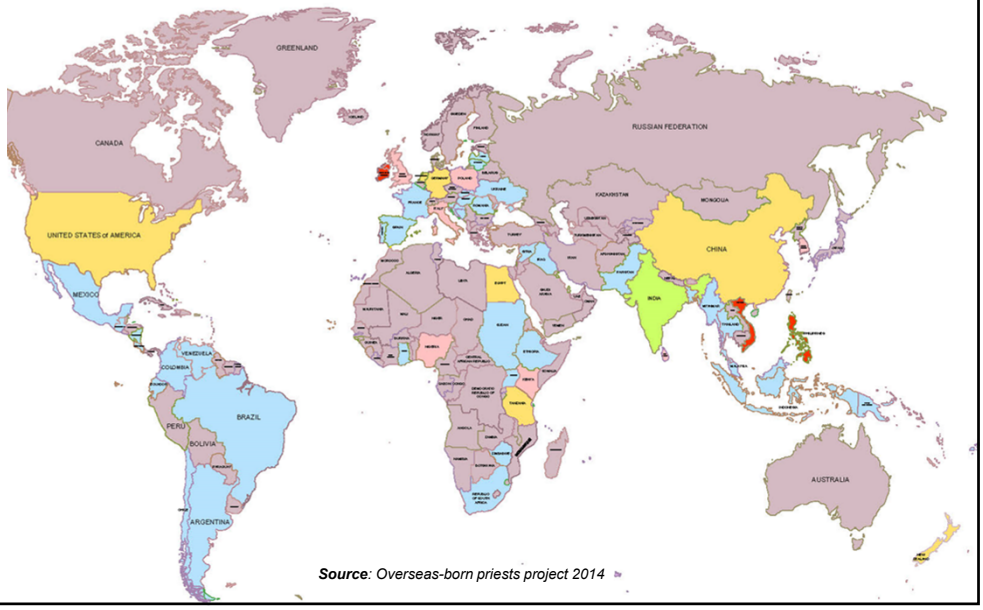
(Also includes religious priests engaged by the diocese to work in parishes and diocesan ministries)

***Source**: Overseas-born priests project 2014*

Overseas-born priests in Australia, 2014

Countries contributing 11-50 priests each:

Malta
Poland
Sri Lanka
UK
Italy
Nigeria
Kenya
South Korea



***Source**: Overseas-born priests project 2014*

Religious congregations – ongoing study

25% of all religious women, religious brothers and clerical religious are born overseas

Birthplace	Number of religious
Ireland (incl. Northern Ireland)	113
New Zealand	109
Vietnam	75
Italy	34
Solomon Islands	32

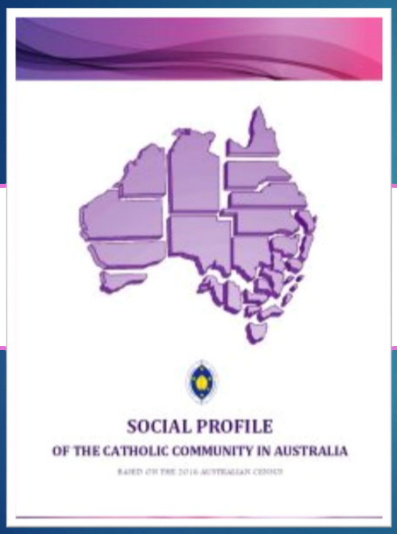
***Source**: Survey of Religious Congregations in Australia, 2018-*

In 2009: Ireland, Vietnam, Samoa, New Zealand and Poland

Some key research areas

- **Study of Religious Life in Australia *(ongoing)***
- **Update of our numbers of overseas-born priests**
- **Study on the experiences of overseas-born priests and religious in Australia**

Resources available from the NCPR



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Social Profile of the Catholic Community in Australia 2016

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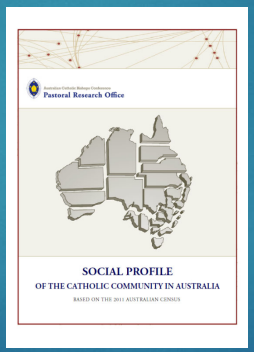
Phone: (02) 6201 9812

Resources available from the NCPR

National Census data for Catholic parishes, dioceses and Australia
based on the 2011 National Census







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