

KNOW THE DIOCESES IN 2020

ARCHDIOCESE of HOBART

Originally (1819-1834) part of the Vicariate Apostolic of the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, Madagascar, New Holland and Van Diemen's Land, the territory of Tasmania was transferred to the Vicariate Apostolic of New Holland and Van Diemen's Land in 1834 under Australia's first bishop, John Polding OSB. In 1842 it was erected as the Diocese of Hobart, one of the first 3 dioceses - with Sydney and Adelaide - established in Australia, and in 1888 was raised to archdiocese. Its geographical area is 68,267 square kilometres¹ and takes in the adjacent islands of Bruny and Maria, and Flinders and King Islands in Bass Strait. The archdiocese is not part of an ecclesiastical province and has no suffragan dioceses, but works collaboratively with the Province of Melbourne.

Demographics: At the 2016 Census 509,965 persons lived in the diocese, with 79,454 self-identified Catholics or 15.6% of the general population. Since the 2001 Census (454,210 and 87,719 (19.3%)), the general population has increased 12%, while the Catholic population has decreased 10%. In 2016 it ranked 16th in Catholic population with the median age of Catholics at 45 years. Australia is the birthplace of 86.4% of all Catholics, including 3,703 indigenous Australians (4.7% of all Catholics), while the largest groups born outside Australia are from the UK (2.1%), Philippines (1.5%), Italy (0.8%), and New Zealand and Poland (0.6% each).

Bishop: The bishop is Julian Porteous BTh., born in Australia in 1949, ordained a priest for the Sydney Archdiocese in 1974, and ordained a bishop in 2003. Previously an auxiliary bishop in Sydney, he was installed as the 11th bishop of Hobart in 2013. His most recent *Quinquennial Report* was prepared for the Australian bishops' June 2019 *ad limina* visit. It has not been made public.

Structure and Governance: The diocese has 27 parishes, including 1 parish cluster. It is one of 17 dioceses with less than 30 parishes. Twenty-two parishes have a full-time resident priest (88%), while 5 share a priest. The diocese has a diocesan financial council and council of priests, but no diocesan pastoral council. The last diocesan synod was held in 1916, but a diocesan assembly was held in 2008. A pastoral plan titled *Christ, our Joy and Hope* was developed in 2015 with the goals of building stronger parishes, increasing religious and clerical vocations, supporting youth and family life, and improving catechesis.² Diocesan policy is to encourage parish pastoral councils.

Priests and Deacons: The diocese has 48 priests, including the bishop³: 37 diocesan and 11 religious. Only 29 are active in parish ministry: 19 diocesan and 10 religious. Of these 13 are Australian-born and 16 overseas-born (5 in India, 3 in Nigeria, 3 in Philippines, 2 in Myanmar, and 1 each in Sri Lanka, Italy and Singapore). Eight live in retirement. The diocese has 4 permanent deacons, with 3 ministering in parishes. There has been a significant turnover of priests in parish ministry in the last 10 years and, as 6 of the Australian-born (including the bishop) were ordained in 1980 or prior, this will likely continue in the near future. The pastoral plan encourages the recruitment of priests from other countries as well as overseas-born seminarians, with their formation taking place in the local seminary. Currently, there are 5 seminarians, most overseas-born, preparing for priesthood. Within 5 years the diocese will be overwhelmingly reliant on overseas-born priests. If only the priests actively ministering in parishes are counted, there are an estimated 2,740 Catholics per priest.

¹ This is a similar geographic area to Ireland (68,883 sq. km)

² <https://en.calameo.com/read/002628780f98dd0434bd8>

³ The Archdiocese did not respond to the 2019 NCPR survey for *The Light from the Southern Cross*.

Lay ministers and officials: Four 4 lay persons minister as pastoral associates in the parishes: 2 religious sisters, 1 religious brother and 1 lay women. Twenty-three lay persons hold senior positions in the diocesan curia: 14 men, 8 women and 1 religious sister. Since 2001 the numbers of religious brothers and sisters has been in significant decline: brothers down 71% to just 5, and sisters down 64% to 54 (from 151 in 2001). Ten congregations of religious sisters reside in the diocese, including a contemplative order of Carmelites and the recently arrived (2013) Sisters of the Immaculata, who focus on youth ministry.

Mass attendance: In 2006 an average 7,175 Catholics attended Mass regularly (8.2%). In 2016 the average was 5,352 (6.7%) – down 25.4%.

Seminary and Seminarians: The Regional Seminary of the Corpus Christi College in Melbourne serves the diocese where 5 seminarians from the archdiocese are in formation. Two were ordained in 2020.

Pastoral ministries: The diocese has active youth, family, marriage, and catechetical ministries with dedicated Offices for each. It also has the Verbum Domini Catechetical Institute.

Ecumenism and Inter-faith: The diocese has an Ecumenical Commission.

Plenary Council: The bishop appointed an 8-person (all lay) Diocesan Working Group in 2018 to prepare for the Council. A total of 3,453 persons (4.3% of all Catholics) responded to the Plenary Council's Listening and Dialogue phase: 172 as individuals (51% women and 24% men) and 3,281 in groups. They identified the top 10 priority issues for the Council as: greater Inclusion of all; fighting for human rights issues; greater focus on Jesus Christ; greater trust, faith and hope in God; ending mandatory celibacy & allowing priests to marry; greater role for women; outreach to youth; greater leadership from bishops; greater emphasis on prayer & sacraments; and sharing the faith with others. Four persons were selected from Hobart for the Discernment and Writing Groups (Archbishop, Belinda Chapman, Ben Smith, Patricia Hindmarsh), and 4 persons have been called to participate in the Council sessions: 2 clerics (bishop and vicar general) and 2 lay persons (Dr Rachel Bradley and Richard De La Motte). Archbishop Porteous did not put his name to the document on *Mission & Evangelising* prepared by the Discernment and Writing Group of which he was a member.

Education: The diocese has 38 Catholic schools: 24 primary, 6 secondary and 8 combined. They educate 14,922 students: 7,778 primary and 7,144 secondary. Since 2019 the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission is the governance authority for the 35 diocesan schools, and works closely with the governing bodies of the three congregational schools. The governance structures recognise the Archbishop as pastor of education, and ensure that Catholic education operates in accord with Canon Law and meets all civil law governance requirements. All schools operate under *The Archbishop's Charter for Catholic Schools*⁴, first published in 2008 and updated in 2016. A special Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Policy, developed with Aboriginal elders and communities and designed to support indigenous children and young people to achieve their full learning potential and support them to embrace their culture and identity, has been operational since 2019. Over 1,000 indigenous students were enrolled in Catholic schools in 2018. A total of 1,579 full-time equivalent staff was employed in 2018, with 17 of the 38 principals being lay women. Revenue for diocesan primary and secondary schools in 2018 was \$220.6 million with \$202.2 million received in grants.⁵ There is no Catholic tertiary education facility in the diocese.

Health and Welfare Services: The diocese provides services for the aged, sick, migrants, refugees, children and families (especially housing) through CatholicCare Tasmania, Calvary Community Care, and Southern Cross Care. Chaplains (including Polish) provide pastoral care in 50 Catholic and other aged-care facilities and in 14

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https://tascathed.schoolzineplus.com/file/media/175/the%20archbishop's%20charter%20for%20catholic%20schools%202016_web.pdf

⁵ https://tascathed.schoolzineplus.com/file/media/480/tceo_annual_report_2018.pdf

hospitals, including 4 operated by Calvary Health. The diocese has focused significantly on aged care over the past 2 decades due to the increased proportion of aged persons in the Catholic community. In 2016, 20% of all Catholics were aged 65 yrs and over (11% in 1996). Employment and disability services are provided by Blueline Laundry and St Vincent de Paul Society.

Finances: The diocese is registered with the Charities Commission (ACNC) as The Roman Catholic Church Trust Corporation of the Archdiocese of Hobart. As a 'Basic Religious Charity' it is not required to answer the financial questions in the Annual Information Statement, submit annual financial reports, or comply with any Governance Standards. The diocese does not publish an annual financial report for its own activities.

Communications: The diocese has a website and publishes a monthly print and online edition of *The Catholic Standard*. The Archbishop's addresses and homilies are published on the website.

Safeguarding and Child Sexual Abuse: The Royal Commission's statistical report did not include the diocese as a significant setting of abuse. However, in its June 2017 *Analysis of Claims* report it notes 14 claims were made against the Archdiocese, with 11 payments made for a total of \$496,894 (average \$45,172 per payment).⁶ The diocese does not have a diocesan safeguarding or professional standards council or committee, but has a *Safe Communities: Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adult Policy* effective from August 2018. The diocese, with 207 other diocesan entities, is a registered participant in the National Redress Scheme as part of Australian Catholic Redress Limited.⁷ In September 2019 the Tasmanian Parliament passed the *Criminal Code and Related Legislation Amendment (Child Abuse) Bill 2018 (no. 63)* mandating all ministers of religion to report knowledge or suspicion of child sexual abuse, including from information gained in a religious confession.

Table 1: Statistical data for Hobart Archdiocese: 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2019

	2001	2006	2011	2016	2019	Change 2001 to 2019
Total Population (at Census)	454,210	476,480	495,360	509,965		+12.2%*
Catholic Population (at Census) (% of Total)	87,719 (19.3%)	87,755 (18.4%)	88,842 (17.9)	79,454 (15.6%)		-9.4%*
Number of Parishes	35	25	25	27	27	-22.9%
Diocesan priests	35	35	32	39	37	+5.7%
Religious priests	21	18	16	11	11	-47.6%
Total Priests	56	53	48	50	48	-14.3%
Priests in active parish ministry			27 (56.3%)		29 (60.4%)	+7.4%**
- Australian-born			22 (81.5%)		13 (44.8%)	-40.9%**
- Overseas-born			5 (18.5%)		16 (55.2%)	+220%**
Parishes with full-time resident priest			16 (64%)		22 (81.5%)	+37.5%**
Catholics per priest in parish ministry			3290		2740 (est)	
Permanent deacons	1	1	2	3	4	+400%
Religious Sisters	151	109	75	62	54	-64.2%
Religious Brothers	17	12	8	7	5	-70.6%
Diocesan Seminarians	1	0	3	6	5	+500%
Diocesan Pastoral Council in operation		No	No	No	No	
Last Diocesan Synod (Diocesan Assembly)	1916	1916	(2008)	(2008)	(2008)	
Diocesan Pastoral Plan in place	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Published Diocesan Annual Report					No	
Catholic schools	39	37	37	38	38	-2.6%
Students in Catholic schools	12,824	13,681	14,604	15,033	14,922	+16.4%
Hospitals	4	4	4	4	4	No change
Nursing & Convalescence Homes	9	9	31	23	21	+133%
Regular Mass attenders	n/a	7,175	6,208	5,352	n/a	-25.4%***

⁶ Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, *Analysis of Claims of Child Sexual Abuse Made with Respect to Catholic Church Institutions*, June 2017. <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/CARC.0050.025.0001.pdf>

⁷ https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions/search?search_api_views_fulltext=catholic+archdiocese+of+hobart

(% of all Catholics)		(8.2%)	(7.0%)	(6.7%)		
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Sources: *Official Catholic Directory* for 2002/03, 2007/08, 2012/13, 2016/17, 2020/21. Data is accurate at 31 December of the previous year, namely, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2019; ACBC, PRO, *Mass Attendance in Australia*, September 2008; ACBC, PRO, *Mass Attendance in Australia: A Critical Moment*, December 2013; ACBC, NCPR. 2016 *National Count of Attendance – National Summary*, Pastoral Research Online, Edition 44, April 2019. Notes: * Change from 2001-2016; ** 2011 to 2019; *** Change from 2006 to 2016

Sources:

Hobart Archdiocesan website: <http://www.hobart.catholic.org.au/>

https://tascathed.schoolzineplus.com/file/media/480/tceo_annual_report_2018.pdf

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https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Hobart_2016-Diocesan-Profile.pdf

ACBC, NCPR, *Final Report for Phase I: Listening and Dialogue A Report to the Archdiocese of Hobart*, Canberra, January 2020.

<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Diocesan-Final-Report-Phase-1-Hobart.pdf>

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<https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/CARC.0050.025.0283.pdf>

Charities Commission: <https://www.acnc.gov.au/tools/topic-guides/basic-religious-charities>

Text and table prepared by Peter J Wilkinson (October 2020)

Note: The draft profile of the diocese was forwarded to Archbishop Porteous with an invitation to correct any errors and to advise of any recent changes made or future plans being contemplated in relation to the recommendations in *The Light from the Southern Cross*. He responded agreeing to the content of the profile.