

# KNOW THE DIOCESES IN 2020

## ARCHDIOCESE OF PERTH

The Diocese of Perth was erected in 1845 with territory excised from the Archdiocese of Sydney. In 1847 it gained extra territory when the Vicariate of King George Sound was suppressed, but lost other territory in 1887 when the Vicariate Apostolic of Kimberley in Western Australia (in 1966 this Vicariate became the Diocese of Broome) was established. In 1898 it lost further territory (1,187,413,000 sq. Km.) to the Diocese of Geraldton, and more (148,506 sq. Km.) when the Diocese of Bunbury was erected in 1954. It gained extra territory in 1982 when the territorial Abbey of New Norcia was suppressed. The land area of the diocese is currently 478,638 sq. Km.<sup>1</sup> In 1913 the Diocese was elevated to an Archdiocese and became the Metropolitan See of the ecclesiastical Province of Perth. It has three suffragan dioceses: Bunbury, Geraldton and Broome.

**Demographics:** At the 2016 Census 1,948,731 persons lived in the diocese, with 429,715 self-identified Catholics (22.1% of total). Since the 2001 Census (1,420,125 and 363,706 (25.6%)) the general population has increased by 37.2% while the Catholic population has increased by 18.1% (+66,009). Catholic numbers are now at their highest level ever, with the diocese ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Australia's Catholic population with a median age of 38 years. Australia is the birthplace of just 62.5% of all Catholics, including 6,836 Indigenous Australians (1.6% of all Catholics), while the biggest groups born outside Australia are from the UK excluding Nth Ireland (5.7%), Philippines (4.4%), Italy (3.4%), Ireland (3.1%), India (2.4%), New Zealand (1.8%), Malaysia and South Africa (each 1.1%), Poland (0.9%), Vietnam, Singapore and Croatia/former Yugoslavia (each 0.8%), and Mauritius, Spain/Portugal, and Indonesia (each 0.6%).

**Bishop:** The bishop is Timothy Costelloe, born in Australia in 1954, ordained a priest for the Salesians of Don Bosco in 1986, and ordained a bishop in 2007. He previously served as an auxiliary bishop in the Melbourne Archdiocese (2007-12). He was installed as the Archbishop of Perth in 2012 (the 10<sup>th</sup> bishop of the diocese). In 2018 he was chosen by his Episcopal confreres to be the President of the 5<sup>th</sup> Plenary Council and approved by Pope Francis. He prepared his most recent *Quinquennial Report* for his June 2019 *ad limina* visit, but has not made it public. The diocese has one auxiliary bishop, Donald Sproxtton, born in Australia in 1953, ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Perth in 1977, and ordained a bishop in 2002.

**Structure and Governance:** At end-2019 the diocese had 109 parishes, with 94 (86.2%) having a full-time resident priest and the others sharing a priest. In April 2021 the diocesan website lists 117 parishes (including 5 chapels and 3 ethnic community parishes). Of these 111 (94.9%) had a full-time resident priest while 6 share a priest. The diocese has a Vicar General, 2 Episcopal Vicars for Clergy and Education and Faith Formation, a Judicial Vicar and a Vicar for Migrant Communities. There is a Diocesan Finance Council and Administrator, Council of Priests, Education Commission (for WA), Marriage Tribunal (for WA), Offices for Youth, Permanent Diaconate, Justice Ecology and Development, Safeguarding, Professional Standards (for WA), and Outreach; and Centres for Faith Enrichment, Life Marriage and Family, RCIA and Liturgy. There is no Diocesan Pastoral Council.<sup>2</sup> Only 2 diocesan synods have ever been held: in 1850 (contested) and 1940. Extensive consultations were held in 2014 to develop the *Archdiocesan Plan for 2016-2021*.<sup>3</sup> The Archbishop said he would use this to prepare for a diocesan pastoral council.<sup>4</sup>

**Priests and Deacons:** At end-2019 there were 265 priests, including the bishop, living in or associated with the diocese: 195 diocesan and 70 religious. Of these 141 (53.2%) - including the 2 bishops and 7 priests-in residence - were active in parish ministry, 21 (including former archbishop) were living in retirement, 14 were working or studying overseas, 12 were working in other Australian dioceses, 4 were ministering in the seminaries, 35 were ministering as full-time or part-time chaplains to Aboriginal and ethnic communities, Catholic secondary colleges, universities, hospitals and lay organisations, and 26 were residing outside the parishes. At 18 April 2021 a total of 148 priests (including both bishops) were ministering in the 117 listed

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<sup>1</sup> This is the area calculated by the 2016 National Census Project (called Statistical Area 1's). This land size is slightly larger than Cameroon (475,442 sq. Km.). The Christmas and Cocos Islands in the Indian Ocean are not within the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese but are pastorally cared for by it.

<sup>2</sup> Under the previous bishop a diocesan pastoral council operated in 2006.

<sup>3</sup> - [Archdiocesan Plan \(perthcatholic.org.au\)](https://perthcatholic.org.au)

<sup>4</sup> [Case Study 50 - Transcript - Institutional review of Catholic Church authorities - Day 255 - 24022017 \(childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au\)](https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/case-study-50-transcript-institutional-review-of-catholic-church-authorities-day-255-24022017)

parishes: 106 diocesan (including 15 NeoCatechumenal Way priests), 41 religious and 1 Ukrainian.<sup>5</sup> Of these at least 50 were Australian-born (33.8%) and possibly 98 (66.2%) overseas-born (in India (19), Vietnam (17), Poland (14), Africa (9), Vietnam (9), Latin America (7), Philippines (6), other Europe (11), other Asia (8) and other). The diocese had 13 permanent deacons at April 2021 with 10 ministering in parishes. There has been a significant turnover of priests in parish ministry in the last 10 years, mainly due to retirements, deaths, and overseas-born priests returning to their home dioceses or transferring to other dioceses. Five Australian-born diocesan priests currently in parish ministry were ordained prior to 1980 and will retire over the next 10 years, indicating that a greater reliance on priests from overseas can be expected. The diocese had 12 diocesan seminarians preparing for priesthood in 2019. Six have since been ordained and 3 are ministering in parishes. If only the priests actively ministering in parishes are counted, there are an estimated 3,047 Catholics per priest.

**Lay ministers and officials:** At end-2019, 27 lay persons held responsible positions in the diocesan curia: 12 men, 13 women and 2 religious sisters. No lay persons were ministering in the parishes, but 1 religious sister was ministering as a pastoral worker with the Vietnamese Community. Currently there are 23 lay religious congregations ministering in the Archdiocese: 21 female and 2 male. Their numbers peaked at 1,216 in 1966 (1,108 sisters and 108 brothers) but have decreased to the present number of 365. Since 2001 religious sister numbers have decreased by 49.5% (from 637 to 322) and religious brothers by 53.8% (from 93 to 43). At present, across Australia, there are few young religious sisters and brothers in ministry.<sup>6</sup>

**Mass attendance and liturgy:** In 2006 the typical weekend Mass attendance was 54,449 (14.4% of all Catholics). In 2016 the number was 58,119 (13.1%) – up 6.7% (+3,670). Perth is one of only 4 dioceses (others are Bunbury, Darwin and Sale) with a numerical increase in Mass attendance. Each priest active in parish ministry at end-2019 was ministering to an average 412 regular Mass attenders. The diocese has a Centre for Liturgy which provides liturgical and RCIA formation and information for parish priests and parishes.

**Seminary and Seminarians:** There are 2 major seminaries in the diocese: St Charles Seminary providing formation for diocesan seminarians from the 4 WA dioceses, and the Redemptoris Mater Seminary providing formation for diocesan missionary seminarians of the NeoCatechumenal Way (predominantly from churches outside Australia). In 2019 there were 22 seminarians in formation for the Perth Archdiocese at both seminaries. Since then 3 candidates have been ordained. The seminarians undertake many of their academic studies at Notre Dame University in Fremantle.

**Pastoral ministries:** Much of the pastoral ministry in the diocese is carried out in the parishes according to the *Archdiocesan Plan for 2016-2021* which has strategies and action plans for 7 priority areas: professional standards, effective communications, clergy support, parish strengthening and revitalisation, adult faith formation, outreach to those in need, and growth and development of the diocese. There are also 35 priest chaplains who minister to Aboriginal and ethnic communities, corrective services, hospitals, universities, and Catholic lay organisations. The diocese has a Christian Initiation Office (RCIA), a Catechist Service, an Outreach Office for Care in Parishes, a Youth Office, a Centre for Faith Enrichment, a Centre for Life, Marriage and Family, and a Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (for all WA). The diocese's Aboriginal Ministry promotes spiritual, cultural and social development, advocates for those struggling to access social services, and works to meet the needs of the marginalised. The Maranatha Centre provides adult faith formation. Marriage preparation programs are offered as well as counselling for couples experiencing difficulties, and natural fertility services are promoted. The Justice, Ecology and Development Office promotes social action for the marginalised and vulnerable and for safeguarding the integrity of all creation. The Youth Office supports young people on their faith journey and empowers them to be leaders of Gospel-centred change.

**Ecumenism and Inter-Faith:** The diocese has an Ecumenical Affairs Committee which fosters education and formation in ecumenism among Catholics and liaises with other Christian Churches.

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<sup>5</sup> This number includes the regular parishes as well as ethnic community parishes/centres, Latin Mass Centre and 5 chapels.

<sup>6</sup> A 2015 study of 93 religious congregations of men and women, with a total membership of 4,427, representing 64 per cent of all religious in Australia, found that only 4% of the women and 11% of the men in the participating congregations were aged under 45 years at the time of the survey. <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CVMA-Report-Final-report-Feb-2018.pdf>

**Plenary Council:** A total of 12,624 persons from the diocese – 1,082 as individuals (54% women and 36% men) and 11,542 in 519 groups – responded to the Plenary Council’s Listening and Dialogue phase. They identified the top 10 priority issues for the Council as: greater inclusion of all; greater trust, faith and hope in God; fighting for human rights issues; greater focus on Jesus Christ; ending mandatory celibacy and allowing priests to marry; a greater role for women; ordination of women; a new model of church, diocese and parish; outreach to youth; and sharing the faith with others. Six persons from the diocese were selected for the Discernment and Writing Groups, and 14 persons have been called to participate in the Council sessions: 2 bishops, 1 vicar general, 2 episcopal vicars, 2 seminary rectors, 1 university vice-chancellor, and 6 lay persons (Mr Damian Walsh, Dr Angela McCarthy, Ms Catherine Nguyen, Ms Gemma Thomson, Dr Marco Ceccarelli, and Ms Emily Hardbottle).

**Education:** The diocese has 112 Catholic schools: 78 primary, 22 secondary, and 12 combined. They educate 57,600 students: 28,662 primary and 28,938 secondary. Of all Catholic children of school age, 53.0% attend Catholic primary schools and 57.1% attend Catholic secondary schools.<sup>7</sup> Among the 112 lay school principals in 2019, only 36.6% (41) were women. In 2020, on a recommendation from the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA), the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) transitioned to a company structure, Catholic Education Western Australia Ltd (CEWA) to be the coordinating body for Catholic education in the WA. CEWA fosters the continuous development and improvement of Catholic schools in WA, and acts on behalf of the Catholic community for the benefit of all Catholic school-aged children, be they in Catholic schools or not. CECWA governs the CEWA system and has responsibility for providing leadership, directing the development of learning communities according to the *Bishops’ Mandate*, developing, promulgating and evaluating school policy and programs, and providing responsible governance.<sup>8</sup> Total income for all Catholic systemic schools in WA in 2019 was \$1.16 billion, with \$889.6 in recurrent and capital funding coming from government grants.<sup>9</sup> The finances for individual dioceses are not available.

The University of Notre Dame Australia has a campus in Fremantle offering degree courses in a range of areas, including Theology. The diocese has a residential college, St Thomas More, on the campus of the University of WA. The diocese provides adult education from the Centre for Faith Enrichment and adult faith development from the Personal Advocacy Service. There is also an Early Learning and Care Centre.

The diocese has its own Catholic Development Fund (CDF), with total assets of \$508.3 million and net assets of \$48.1 million in 2019. The Perth CDF provides financial services to the Dioceses of Geraldton and Broome and in 2019 had outstanding loans of \$324.3 million to all 3 dioceses, mostly for parish and educational projects. A distribution of \$6.3 million from accumulated funds was made to the 3 dioceses in 2019.<sup>10</sup>

**Health and Welfare Services:** Centrecare is the diocese’s main social welfare provider. Established in the 1940s it now has over 300 staff and volunteers providing professional counselling, support, mediation, and training services from 11 branches to some 30,000 clients throughout the diocese, including in remote Aboriginal communities.<sup>11</sup> Services include help with domestic violence, gambling, homelessness, dispute resolution, youth support, finances, mental illness and post separation. Under its new Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) it is developing and strengthening its relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and has set up 2 special programs: *Footprints to Stronger Families* and Djooraminda Out-of Home Care for children. Centrecare’s 2019/2020 Annual Report provides few details on its finances except that 86.4% of its funding comes from government grants. Catholic Aboriginal Ministry, Daydawn Advocacy Centre, and Kamarang Women’s Refuge also provide dedicated services to Indigenous peoples. Other agencies providing special and general social welfare services in the diocese are Billings Life WA (marriage and family planning), Catholic Ministry with Deaf and Hard of Hearing People (disability), Centacare Employment and Training, Emmanuel Centre (disability), Identitywa (disability), Pregnancy Assistance, Ruah Community Services (general), The Shopfront (general), and St Vincent de Paul Society (WA).

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<sup>7</sup> ACBC, NCPR, *Diocesan Social Profile, Based on 2016 Australian Census: Archdiocese of Perth*, Canberra, September 2019. [https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Perth\\_2016-Diocesan-Profile.pdf](https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Perth_2016-Diocesan-Profile.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> CEWA Ltd incorporates the operations of 147 Diocesan schools, CEOWA, Catholic Schools (WA) Long Service Leave Fund, Catholic Schools (WA) Co-responsibility Building Fund, Teacher Housing and the Catholic Education Commission of WA Trustees Inc (Block Grant Authority).

<sup>9</sup> [AnnualReport2019\\_SpreadsWeb\\_LR.pdf \(cewa.edu.au\)](#)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.cdfperth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2019-CDF-Audited-Financial-Statements.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> [About us - Centrecare](#)

Other Catholic entities provide multiple health and aged cared services. St John of God Australia operates 4 hospitals in the Perth area, and in response to the increasing numbers of Catholics aged 65 years and over in recent decades – from 10.2% in 1996 to 14.9% in 2016 – several agencies have built and operate 41 aged accommodation and nursing home facilities. They include the Archdiocese, Christian Brothers, Mercycare, Mt La Verna Retirement Village, Southern Cross Care (WA), St Brigid’s Convent of Mercy Perth, St Gerard’s Villas, St John of God Australia, and the Cabrini Sisters and Italian Community.

**Finances:** The Archdiocese is registered with the Charities Commission (ACNC) as the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Perth Corporation Sole, along with all the parishes and other related Catholic entities. As a ‘Basic Religious Charity’ the diocese is not required to answer the financial questions in the Annual Information Statement, submit annual financial reports, or comply with any Governance Standards. The Archdiocese does not provide an annual financial report. The Catholic Development Fund of Perth Archdiocese has published a detailed *Annual Financial Report for 2019*<sup>12</sup>, and Centrecare has published a *2019/2020 Annual Report*, but with no detailed financial information.

**Communications:** The diocese has a website and publishes the bi-monthly print and online *The Record Magazine*. A weekly News service is published online, short videos are available on the website, and there are links to social media. The diocese does not publish an annual report.

**Safeguarding and Child Sexual Abuse:** The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse identified the Archdiocese of Perth as a significant setting for clerical abuse. Among all the Australian dioceses it had one of the highest overall proportions (8.3%) of priest members who were alleged perpetrators, after taking into account the duration of ministry.<sup>13</sup> The Commission’s June 2017 *Analysis of Claims* noted that the Perth Archdiocese had 20 alleged priest perpetrators of abuse, with 12 receiving their formation at St Charles Seminary. A total of 93 claims were made against the Archdiocese, with 24 payments made for a total of \$1.53 million (average \$64,000 per payment).<sup>14</sup>

With the other 3 WA dioceses, the Perth Archdiocese has committed to protecting children and vulnerable adults from abuse or harm and to developing a culture of safety defined by transparency and accountability. In 2014 the 4 dioceses established the WA Professional Standards Office (WAPSO) to implement the National Response Protocol (NRP) throughout WA commencing in February 2021. WAPSO follows the established Catholic national policies and procedures on professional standards and code of conduct. All WA dioceses have joined the National Redress Scheme (NRS) and the Perth Archdiocese, with 266 other diocesan entities, is a registered participant as part of Australian Catholic Redress Limited.<sup>15</sup>

**Table 1: Statistical data for Perth Archdiocese: 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, 2019 and 2021**

|  | 2001      | 2006      | 2011      | 2016      | 2019 | 2021 at 17 April | Change 2001 to 2019 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Total Population (at Census)</b>    | 1,420,125 | 1,542,789 | 1,748,721 | 1,948,731 |      |                  | +37.2%              |
| <b>Catholic Population (at Census)</b> | 363,706   | 378,974   | 426,595   | 429,715   |      |                  | +66,009             |

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.cdfperth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2018-CDF-Audited-Financial-Statements.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, *Proportion of Priests and non-ordained religious subject to a claim of child sexual abuse, 1950-2020*, June 2017 (revised version) :

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

<sup>14</sup> 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>

<sup>15</sup> [https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions/search?search\\_api\\_views\\_fulltext=catholic+diocese+of+ballarat](https://www.nationalredress.gov.au/institutions/search?search_api_views_fulltext=catholic+diocese+of+ballarat)

|   |         |                   |                   |                   |                |                   |                       |
|---|---------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| (% of Total)                                | (25.6%) | (24.6%)           | (24.4%)           | (22.1%)           |                |                   | +18.1%                |
| Number of Parishes                          | 104     | 107               | 108               | 109               | 109            | 117 <sup>16</sup> | +4.8%                 |
| Diocesan priests                            | 129     | 158               | 177               | 193               | 195            |                   | +51.2%                |
| Religious priests                           | 119     | 123               | 109               | 84                | 70             |                   | -41.2%                |
| Total Priests                               | 248     | 281               | 286               | 277               | 265            |                   | +6.9%                 |
| Priests in active parish ministry           |         |                   | 146<br>(51.0%)    |                   | 141<br>(53.2%) | 148               | +1.4%**               |
| - Australian-born                           |         |                   | 66 (45.2%)        |                   | 44 (31.2%)     | 50 <sup>17</sup>  | -24.2% **             |
| - Overseas-born                             |         |                   | 80 (54.8%)        |                   | 97 (68.8%)     | 98 <sup>18</sup>  | +22.5% **             |
| Parishes with full-time resident priest     |         |                   | 94<br>(87.0%)     |                   | 94<br>(86.2%)  | 103<br>(94.5%)    | +9<br>+9.6%           |
| Catholics per priest in parish ministry     |         |                   | 2,921             |                   | 3,047 (est.)   |                   |                       |
| Permanent deacons                           | 1       | 14                | 14                | 13                | 12             | 13                | +1100%                |
| Religious Sisters                           | 637     | 444               | 441               | 357               | 322            |                   | -49.5%                |
| Religious Brothers                          | 93      | 55                | 57                | 46                | 43             |                   | -53.8%                |
| Diocesan Seminarians                        | 39      | 43                | 51                | 27                | 22             |                   | -45.6%                |
| Diocesan Pastoral Council in operation      |         | Yes               | No                | No                | No             |                   |                       |
| Last Diocesan Synod (Diocesan Assembly)     | 1940    | 1940              | 1940              | 1940              | 1940<br>(1989) |                   |                       |
| Diocesan Pastoral Plan in place             |         |                   |                   | Yes               | Yes            | Yes               |                       |
| Catholic schools                            | 109     | 107               | 107               | 120               | 112            |                   | +2.8%                 |
| Students in Catholic schools                | 49,009  | 50,211            | 53,108            | 60,083            | 57,600         |                   | +17.5%                |
| Hospitals                                   | 3       | 3                 | 3                 | 4                 | 4              |                   | +33.3%                |
| Aged Care Accommodation Facilities          | 37      | 30                | 34                | 32                | 41             |                   | +10.8%                |
| Regular Mass attenders (% of all Catholics) |         | 54,449<br>(14.4%) | 56,616<br>(13.3%) | 58,119<br>(13.1%) |                |                   | +3,670***<br>+6.7%*** |

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 2021; \*\*\* Change from 2006 to 2016

#### Sources:

Perth diocesan website: <http://www.perthcatholic.org.au>

*The Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia*, 2020-2021 (data is accurate at 31 December 2019)

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[https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Perth\\_2016-Diocesan-Profile.pdf](https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Perth_2016-Diocesan-Profile.pdf)

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

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

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, *Proportion of Priests and non-ordained religious subject to a claim of child sexual abuse, 1950-2020*, June 2017 (revised version) :

<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>

2020 Annual Progress Report on Implementation of the Recommendations from the Final Report of the Royal

Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse: [FINAL Catholic Church Annual Report to NOCS.pdf - Google Drive](#)

Text and table prepared by Peter J Wilkinson (April 2021)

Note: The draft profile of the Diocese was forwarded to Archbishop Costelloe with an invitation to correct any errors and to provide advice on any recent changes made or future plans being contemplated in relation to the recommendations in *The Light from the Southern Cross*. A response was received with several corrections to the text and all have been incorporated.

<sup>16</sup> This number includes 109 regular parishes, 5 chapels and 3 ethnic community parishes.

<sup>17</sup> Estimate only.

<sup>18</sup> Estimate only.