

## **2016 CENSUS RESULTS AND CATHOLICS IN PAKENHAM,**

**OFFICER:** Many would have seen news coverage over the last fortnight of the release of data from the 2016 Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, taken on August 9. The total number of Catholics recorded in the 2016 Census for the parish is **approximately 10877 persons**. So nearly 11,000 people!

**\*How is this calculated?:** This is a slightly challenging exercise as the parish covers Pakenham and part of Officer. The total number of people counted in Pakenham Postcode area was 47,894 persons. (This is a significant increase from 35,306 persons in 2011.). Of these 10,181 people (21.3%) in Pakenham chose to identify as Catholic This was a lower percentage than the 2011 Census (24%) 8,472 Catholics. This decline is in line with the fall in religious identification noted in the mainstream media.

The Officer Postcode area had 1765 people (24.4%) indicate they were Catholic this Census. If we make an assumption that 40 percent of the Catholics identified live in our parish, this is 706 persons. Adding the Pakenham and Officer figures together you get 10877 people. This is still a significant Catholic population to outreach to!

**Participation:** Catholics commit to different levels of involvement in, and expression of, their faith. Research indicates about 10% attend mass regularly, a least once within a month, so this would be approximately 1,088 people. A higher participation rate of 30 percent or 3,266 people is what we might see of people who have at least one contact a year with the parish through schools and Christmas masses etc.

**What does this mean for us?** This challenges us to reach out to all Catholics in our parish and be inclusive and open to all who identify with the faith. As well as continuing to welcome Catholics who move into the parish, are born in the parish or who are inspired to join the faith, as the population growth in Pakenham and Officer continues for the next 20-30 years! The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Pastoral Projects Office will compile information by parish in the coming months. This focuses on the released data mainly for the Pakenham postcode area (3810).

**Who lives in our community? *Characteristics of people living in Pakenham and their circumstances:***

**Median age:** 32 compared to 37 for Victoria;

**Top countries of birth:** Australia-71.5%, England 4%, India 2.7%, New Zealand 2.3% , Sri Lanka 1.2%, Philippines 1% (for Victoria, Australian born 64.9% )

**Top spoken languages other than English:** 79.2% of people only spoke English at home. Other languages spoken at home included Punjabi 1.4%, Sinhalese 1.1%, Arabic 0.8%, Hindi 0.7% and Spanish 0.6%.

**Family Composition:** 48.8% were couple families with children, 31.0% were couple families without children and 18.9% were one parent families. (for Victoria 46.3% Couples with Children, 15.3% single parent families.)

**Home tenure:** Of occupied private dwellings in 3810 Postal Area, 19.3% were owned outright, 46.3% were owned with a mortgage and 30.1% were rented. (for Victoria 32.3% owned outright, 35.3% mortgage, 28.7% rented)

Pakenham has a younger population, more families with children and single parents, and more households with mortgages and a greater number of residents born in Australia when compared to the whole state of Victoria.

Source:

[http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census\\_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/POA3810](http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2016/quickstat/POA3810)

***Parish Pastoral Council member - Liz Roberts.***