

**TEACHERS IN CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**AND THE NEW EVANGELISATION**

John Kyle-Robinson

BA DipEd, MEd

A thesis submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Education

Faculty of Education and Arts  
Australian Catholic University  
25A Barker Road, Strathfield NSW 2135

February, 2020



## **Statement of Original Authorship**

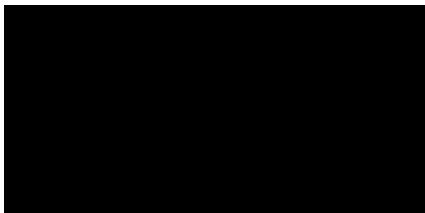
This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No parts of this thesis have been submitted towards the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis. A professional was engaged in the final stages of this thesis to assist with editorial advice only.

All research procedures reported in this thesis received the approval of the relevant ethics committees (see Appendices A & B).

Signature:



Date: 1 February 2020

## **Acknowledgements**

I wish to acknowledge so many wonderful people who have supported me in this work and without whom I could not have completed this thesis. It is simply impossible to thank all those who have journeyed with me, but important to acknowledge some in particular:

To my wife Louise for her love, encouragement and support over so many years, for living this study with me while we raised three young children and for allowing me the opportunity and time to complete this work - canonisation surely awaits you!

To my three magnificent sons and the greatest joys of my life, Tom, Dan and Jack! It's done!

To my parents who instilled in me a love for learning and a love of our Catholic faith, to my siblings and extended family – thank you for your patience and encouragement.

My sincere thanks to Sydney Catholic Schools, especially Dr Dan White, Dr Mark Turkington, Dr Michael Krawec and my colleagues in Catholic school leadership for their encouragement and support of me in this study during my time as a secondary school principal in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Thank you to Marist Schools Australia, especially Dr Frank Malloy for his constant interest, advice and support during this study.

To my friends and colleagues who have, in their own ways, asked great questions to synthesise this work and encouraged and cajoled me to complete it.

My heartfelt thanks to the Catholic school communities, teachers and leaders who have participated in this research. The authenticity with which you undertake the precious responsibility of educating and forming young people is truly one of the greatest success stories of our Church. I hope and pray that this study contributes to support your work.

To the staff of the Australian Catholic University for the opportunity to undertake this study. A particular thanks to my co-supervisor, Associate Professor William Sultmann.

Finally, to my friend and supervisor, Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin. Denis, you have challenged and inspired me so often, have taught me so much and deepened my own faith. I will always be grateful for your companionship on this journey.

## Table of Contents

Statement of Original Authorship.....	i
Acknowledgements .....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Figures .....	viii
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Abbreviations.....	xii
Abstract.....	xiii
<b>Chapter 1: The Research Problem Identified.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Design.....	2
1.3 Significance of the Research.....	4
1.4 Outline of the Thesis.....	4
<b>Chapter 2: Defining the Research Problem.....</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	6
2.2 Conceptualising the Research Problem.....	6
2.3 Australian Catholic Education.....	7
2.4 Australian Catholicism.....	12
2.5 Global Catholicism.....	20
2.6 The New Evangelisation.....	28
2.7 The New Evangelisation and Australia.....	32
2.8 Defining the Research Problem.....	33
2.9 The Research Purpose.....	33
2.10 The General Research Question.....	33
<b>Chapter 3: The Review of the Literature.....</b>	<b>34</b>
3.1 Conceptual Framework.....	34

3.2	Teachers' Experiences of Catholicism in Contemporary Australia.....	35
3.2.1	Catholic secondary school teachers.....	35
3.2.2	The relationship of Australian Catholic secondary school teachers with contemporary Catholicism.....	38
3.2.3	The diversification of Australian religious belief and practice....	52
3.3	The Contested Understandings of the New Evangelisation.....	58
3.3.1	The origins of the New Evangelisation.....	58
3.3.2	The New Evangelisation and mission .....	63
3.3.3	The contested understandings of the New Evangelisation.....	66
3.3.4	Research on the understanding of the New Evangelisation.....	74
3.4	The Complexities of the Contemporary Australian Catholic School.....	76
3.4.1	The mission of the Catholic school.....	76
3.4.2	The complexity of the Australian Catholic School and the New Evangelisation.....	78
<b>Chapter 4: Design of the Research.....</b>		<b>96</b>
4.1	Introduction.....	96
4.2	Theoretical Framework.....	96
4.2.1	Epistemology.....	97
4.2.2	Theoretical perspective.....	98
4.3	Methodology.....	99
4.4	Participants.....	101
4.5	Data Gathering Strategies.....	103
4.5.1	Semi-structured interviews .....	103
4.5.2	Documentary analysis.....	103
4.6	Analysis of Data.....	104
4.6.1	Stages of data analysis.....	105

4.6.2	Open coding.....	106
4.6.3	Axial coding.....	106
4.6.2	Selective coding.....	106
4.7	Trustworthiness.....	108
4.7.1	Credibility.....	108
4.7.2	Transferability.....	108
4.7.3	Dependability.....	109
4.7.4	Confirmability.....	109
4.8	Ethical Issues.....	110
4.9	Limitations and Delimitations.....	110
	<b>Chapter 5: Presentation of the New Understandings.....</b>	<b>112</b>
5.1	Introduction.....	112
5.2	Case Study 1 – St Mary’s College.....	113
5.2.1	Context.....	113
5.2.2	Case Study One: Specific Research Question One.....	115
5.2.3	Case Study One: Specific Research Question Two.....	125
5.2.4	Case Study One: Specific Research Question Three.....	132
5.3	Case Study 2: St Francis College.....	146
5.3.1	Context.....	146
5.3.2	Case Study Two: Specific Research Question One.....	148
5.3.3	Case Study Two: Specific Research Question Two.....	157
5.3.4	Case Study Two: Specific Research Question Three.....	164
5.4	Case Study 3: St John’s College.....	174
5.4.1	Context.....	174
5.4.2	Case Study Three: Specific Research Question One.....	175
5.4.3	Case Study Three: Specific Research Question Two.....	183

5.4.4	Case Study Three: Specific Research Question Three.....	189
<b>Chapter 6:</b>	<b>Discussion of the New Understandings.....</b>	<b>196</b>
6.1	Introduction.....	196
6.2	Catholic Schools are Choosing to Offer Meaningful Catholicism to a Disinterest Constituency.....	199
6.2.1	Teachers’ experiences of contemporary Catholicism.....	200
6.2.2	Offering meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality to the school community.....	208
6.3	The New Evangelisation: Contestable and Contrasting Understandings.....	213
6.3.1	The contested and contrasting understandings of the New Evangelisation.....	216
6.3.2	The absence of a common, precise understanding of the New Evangelisation.....	222
6.4	Implementing the New Evangelisation: A call to service not an agenda for conversion.....	223
6.4.1	Teachers’ responses to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.....	225
6.4.2	The New Evangelisation as a call to service not an agenda for conversion.....	231
<b>Chapter 7:</b>	<b>Conclusions and Recommendations.....</b>	<b>231</b>
7.1	Research Design.....	231
7.2	Limitations of the Research.....	232
7.3	New Understandings Concerning Each of the Research Questions.....	232
7.3.1	Specific research question one.....	232
7.3.2	Specific research question two.....	233
7.3.3	Specific research question three.....	235
7.4	Conclusions of the Research.....	237
7.4.1	Contributions to new knowledge.....	237



7.4.2	Contributions to policy.....	240
7.4.3	Contributions to practice.....	242
7.5	Recommendations.....	243
7.5.1	Policy.....	245
7.5.2	Practice.....	245
<b>References.....</b>		<b>247</b>

## **Appendices**

Appendix A:	Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee Project Approval Certificate.....	278
Appendix B:	Catholic Education Office, Sydney: Letter of Approval for Research .....	279
Appendix C:	Information Letter to Principals .....	280
Appendix D:	Consent Form - Principal.....	285
Appendix E:	Information Letter to Participants for Focus Group Interview .....	286
Appendix F:	Consent Form – Teacher Interview Participant.....	289
Appendix G:	Information Letter to Participants for Individual Interview .....	290
Appendix H:	Consent Form – Individual Interview Participant .....	293
Appendix I:	Interview Questions Schedule .....	294
Appendix J:	Documentary Evidence Provided by Each College .....	296
Appendix K:	Individual Interview and Focus Group Schedule.....	298

## List of Figures

Figure 2.1	Conceptualising the Research Problem.....	7
Figure 2.2	Cumulative Change in Catholic and Non-Catholic Enrolments, 2006–2013.....	9
Figure 2.3	Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff, Australia, 1989–2014.....	10
Figure 2.4	Australian Religious: 1948–2010.....	11
Figure 2.5	Emerging Major Religions, Australian Census 2006–2016.....	13
Figure 2.6	Projected Change in Religiously Unaffiliated Populations, 2010–2050...22	
Figure 2.7	Catholic Parishes, 1980–2012.....	25
Figure 2.8	Sacramental Practice per 1000 Catholics, 1980–2012.....	26
Figure 2.9	Weekly Mass Attendance, 1980–2010.....	27
Figure 3.1	Conceptual Framework.....	34
Figure 3.2	The Contested Understandings of the New Evangelisation.....	67
Figure 3.3	The Complexities of the Australian Catholic School and the New Evangelisation.....	79
Figure 3.4	Teachers in Australian Catholic Secondary Schools – Categories of Complex Expectations.....	89
Figure 4.1	Map Showing Regional Distribution of Catholic Schools administered by the Catholic Education Office in 2014.....	101
Figure 4.2	Analysis of Data.....	105
Figure 4.3	Gathering and Analysis of the Data.....	107
Figure 6.1	Teachers’ Understandings of the New Evangelisation.....	215

## List of Tables

Table 1.1	Summary of the Research Design.....	2
Table 2.1	Statistical Overview of Australian Catholic Schools.....	8
Table 2.2	Australian Religious Affiliation 1966–2016.....	12
Table 2.3	Australian Catholic Demography: 1996–2016.....	14
Table 2.4	Australian Catholic Population: Age Profile %, 2001–2016.....	15
Table 2.5	Australian Catholic Population and Regular Mass Attendance, 1947–2011.....	16
Table 2.6	Mass Attenders' Acceptance of Catholic Moral Teachings and Beliefs, 1996–2011.....	17
Table 2.7	Reasons Catholic Parents of Children Attending Catholic Schools Have Ceased Attending Mass.....	19
Table 2.8	2014–15 World Population–Catholics.....	21
Table 2.9	Changes in Roman Catholicism, 1970–2016.....	23
Table 3.1	Teachers in Australian Secondary Catholic Schools in the period 2013–2014.....	34
Table 3.2	Perceptions of Teachers in Queensland Catholic Schools.....	40
Table 3.3	Survey of Teachers' Opinions Regarding Certain Aspects of Catholic Education, Queensland Catholic Schools.....	42
Table 3.4	Australian Catholic Bishops' Youth Survey (Aged 16–29).....	44
Table 3.5	Australia's Gen Zs Project (13–18 Years old): Negotiating Religion, Sexuality and Diversity–Spirituality Types.....	45
Table 3.6	Major Negative Influence on Australians Perceptions of Christians and Christianity.....	50
Table 3.7	Responses of Mass Attenders in Australian Catholic Parishes to Child Sexual Abuse Within the Catholic Church, 2016.....	51
Table 3.8	Faith and Belief in Australia, 2017.....	53
Table 3.9	Catholic Identities: Sociological Types.....	56
Table 3.10	Models of Evangelisation Derived From Scripture.....	59
Table 3.11	The New Evangelisation and Major Post Conciliar Church Documents.....	62
Table 3.12	An Overview of the Development of the Church's Concept of Mission.....	64

Table 3.13	Have You Even Heard of the New Evangelisation? .....	75
Table 3.14	Characteristics of Catholic School Identity Within the United States of America and Australia.....	81
Table 3.15	Teacher Perceptions of Catholic School Identity Characteristics Across the United States and Australia.....	82
Table 3.16	Catholic and non-Catholic Students, 2006–2014.....	84
Table 3.17	Mass-Attending lay Teachers in Australian Catholic Schools .....	87
Table 3.18	Evaluation of the Implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers–Secondary Teachers.....	91
Table 3.19	Australian Secondary Teachers’ Role and Perceived Efficacy in Supporting Student Mental Health.....	94
Table 4.1	Theoretical Framework for the Research Design.....	97
Table 4.2	Participants in the Study.....	102
Table 4.3	Data Gathering Sequence.....	103
Table 5.1	Participants in the Study.....	113
Table 5.2	Case Study One: Research Question One. How do Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools Experience the Contemporary Expression of Catholicism?.....	116
Table 5.3	Case Study One: Research Question one.....	126
Table 5.4	Case Study One: Participant-identified Evangelisation Experiences.....	129
Table 5.5	Case Study One: Research Question Three–Emerging Themes.....	133
Table 5.6	Case Study One: Teachers’ Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation.....	134
Table 5.7	Case Study One: St Mary’s Liturgical Program.....	136
Table 5.8	Case Study One: Evangelisation Opportunities at St Mary’s College.....	140
Table 5.9	Case Study Two: Teachers’ Experiences of Contemporary Catholicism.....	149
Table 5.10	Summary of School-based Connections to the Contemporary Catholic Church.....	154
Table 5.11	Case Study Two: How do Teachers Understand the New Evangelisation?.....	159
Table 5.12	Case Study Two: Research Question Three–Emerging Themes.....	164

Table 5.13	Case Study Two: Teachers’ Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation.....	166
Table 5.14	Case Study Three: Teachers’ Experiences of Contemporary Catholicism.....	176
Table 5.15	Case Study Three: How do Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools Understand the New Evangelisation?.....	184
Table 5.16	Case Study Three: Research Question three–Emerging Themes....	189
Table 5.17	Case Study Three: Teachers’ Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation.....	190
Table 6.1	Generation of Issues for Discussion.....	197
Table 6.2	Structure for the Discussion of the new Understandings.....	199
Table 6.3	Teachers’ Understanding of the New Evangelisation.....	215
Table 6.4	Teachers’ Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation.....	223
Table 6.5	Synthesis of Teacher Participants’ Responses to the New Evangelisation.....	224
Table 7.1	Teachers’ Understanding of the New Evangelisation.....	234
Table 7.2	Teachers’ Responses to the New Evangelisation. ....	236
Table 7.3	Links between Chapters 5, 6, and 7 and the key Recommendations for Policy and Practice in Catholic Secondary Schools Regarding the New Evangelisation.....	244

## **List of Abbreviations**

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)

Australian Catholic University (ACU)

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)

Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse  
(ARCIRCSA)

Congregation of Catholic Education (CCE)

Constant Comparative Analysis (CCA)

Council of Australian Governments (COAG)

Full-time equivalent (FTE)

Key Learning Area (KLA)

Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs  
(MCEETYA)

National Assessment Programme for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC)

Pastoral Research Office (PRO)

Religious Education Coordinators (RECs)

## Abstract

Christianity, and specifically Roman Catholicism, is experiencing a period of global growth at the same time as declining affiliation and practice of the Christian faith is evident in many developed nations (Hackett, Stonawski, Potancokova, Grim, & Skirbekk, 2015b). This decline is evident in Australia (Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2017b). The Roman Catholic Church has responded to the decline in affiliation and practice through an initiative called the *New Evangelisation* (Pope John Paul II, 1991). The emphasis on the New Evangelisation by the Catholic Church has contributed to the decision by Australian ecclesial and educational leaders to incorporate the New Evangelisation explicitly into the mission of Catholic schools (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). Moreover, programs have been introduced into schools to engage school communities as *Centres of the New Evangelisation* (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). Consequently, teachers in Catholic schools are expected to be the primary conduits for New Evangelisation initiatives (Pope John Paul II, 2001b, No. 33).

The research problem underpinning this study concerns teachers' understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools. The purpose of this research is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation. The major research question is:

How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation?

The following specific research questions focus the conduct of the research:

1. How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?
2. How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?
3. How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

This study is of significance because it may assist in preparing school leaders and teachers appropriately to implement the New Evangelisation by addressing the paucity of research regarding teachers understanding and implementation of the New Evangelisation in Catholic schools.

Given the purpose of this study, the research paradigm of interpretivism is adopted. The epistemological framework of constructionism is appropriate as the study explores teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation. Symbolic interactionism is the theoretical perspective for this research using case study methodology. Participants are selected purposively from among teachers in a bounded context and data are gathered through the use of documentary analysis and semi-structured interviews.

The limitations of this study include the case study limitations together with the responsiveness of the participants. A delimitation of the research is the purposive selection of participants. It is the researcher's intention to ensure a reliable, voluntary and stress-free environment for all participants during the research. Processes to ensure participant confidentiality as well as the reliability and truthfulness of the research are established.

This research generates eight conclusions relating to new knowledge, policy and practice.

First, teacher participants distinguish between the experience of contemporary Catholicism within the Catholic secondary school and the experience of Catholicism in parishes and the institutional Catholic Church.

Second, Catholic schools ensure appropriate expressions of Catholic practice for staff and students and that for many Catholics, the Catholic school is the only community in which they worship.

Third, the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA) has exacerbated the disinterest in, if not rejection of Catholicism by many Catholic students, families and staff. Further, the study concludes that the ARCIRCSA has exacerbated the challenges which teachers experience concerning evangelising in a secular context.

Fourth, the concept of the New Evangelisation is problematic for some teachers who are charged with its implementation.

Fifth, teacher participants exhibit multiple, contestable and contrasting understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation.

Sixth, the study concludes that there are five distinct issues which mitigate against Australian Catholic secondary schools' implementation of the New Evangelisation.



Seventh, teacher participants implement the New Evangelisation according to their individual understandings of what constitutes the New Evangelisation. Since teachers do not share an agreed purpose for the New Evangelisation, they have multiple and at times conflicting responses to it.

Finally, this study concludes that a relatively small number of teachers are responsible for the implementation of the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.



## **Chapter 1**

### **The Research Problem Identified**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

I am married, the father of three teenage boys and have worked in Catholic education for over 30 years. I am currently a regional director for Marist Schools Australia in New South Wales (NSW) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and have held this role since 2017. This role involves the animation of the Marist charism in Marist schools and governance responsibilities for those schools owned by the Trustees of the Marist Brothers.

I began teaching in the western suburbs of Sydney, Australia, in 1988 and shortly thereafter joined a Catholic congregation of teaching Brothers. During my seven years with this Congregation I had the opportunity to live and work in Australia, Papua New Guinea and India. On leaving the Congregation and marrying, I continued to work in Catholic education holding a variety of pastoral, religious education and senior administrative leadership positions before being appointed as a Catholic systemic school Principal, a role I held for eleven years.

This research commenced when I was the Foundation Principal of a Year 7–12 coeducational Catholic secondary school (2006-2011) and continued when, from 2012–2016, I led the college which, at the time, was the largest systemic Catholic coeducational secondary school in the Archdiocese of Sydney. The leadership of these schools coincided with the decision by Australian ecclesial and Catholic educational leaders to incorporate the New Evangelisation explicitly into the mission of Catholic schools (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007).

The initial impetus for this study was the experience of teachers and leaders seeking to understand and implement the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools. These teachers and leaders are, overwhelmingly, strongly committed educators wanting to provide young people with the very best religious and educational opportunities. This study seeks to give voice to their experience. Further, this research emanates from an interest in understanding the nature of the contemporary religious context in which Australian Catholic schools operate. Moreover, as a parent and experienced Catholic educator I am passionate about ensuring that young people

experience meaningful expressions of Catholicism to enable them to encounter God who is love, reflected in the person of Jesus Christ (Pope Benedict XVI, 2006).

## 1.2 Research Design

The purpose of the study is to explore how teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation. The conceptualisation and context of this research purpose is explained in Chapter Two.

In Chapter Three, the Literature Review, three specific research questions are generated. These focus the conduct of the research and the research design. These are:

How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?

How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?

How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

The theoretical framework adopted is interpretivism and the summary of the research design is outlined in Table 1.1.

**Table 1.1**

*Summary of the Research Design*

Theoretical framework	Interpretivism
Epistemology	Constructionism
Theoretical perspective	Symbolic interactionism
Methodology	Multi-site case study
Participants	Purposive selection
Methods	Document analysis Semi-structured interviews

### 1.2.1 Epistemology.

In order to gain an understanding of secondary teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation, an epistemological framework of constructionism has been chosen for this study. Constructionism is an epistemology that asserts that knowledge and meaning is constructed by people in their social context (Crotty, 1998). Knowledge then is not a commodity that is found, but rather, knowledge and meaning are constructed and evolve

in a specific context (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). A constructionist epistemology is adopted because this study explores how teachers construct their own understanding of the New Evangelisation through their interactions with others and within the context of the Catholic secondary school. Thus, teachers' understandings and responses to the concept of the New Evangelisation are socially constructed and influenced by their particular context.

### **1.2.1 Theoretical perspective.**

This research concerns both the lived experiences of teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools and how they construct their understanding of their context. Consequently, symbolic interactionism is the theoretical perspective chosen for this research.

Symbolic interactionism asserts that “human beings attach their own meaning to things” arising from social interactions (O'Donoghue, 2018, p. 19). This point of view guides the researcher as it provides a theoretical perspective based on the theory that individuals within their social world create meaning (Stake, 2004). This perspective is relevant in researching teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation because symbolic interactionism holds that meaning is not static but is adjusted as new information arises through interactions with others (O'Donoghue, 2018). This is relevant for the study as teachers interact with others in their school context and beyond, and these interactions shape their understanding of the New Evangelisation and its subsequent implementation in schools.

### **1.2.2 Research methodology.**

Research methodology is the “strategy, plan of action, process and design lying behind the choice of particular methods” selected for the research (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The research methodology is a framework that provides an explanation for the choice of research methods selected for the research (Crotty, 1998, p. 40). Case study is the methodology adopted for this study exploring the experience of the New Evangelisation by a sample of teachers in Australian Catholic schools.

### **1.2.3 Participants.**

The participants in this research are teachers in three Catholic secondary schools in an Australian metropolitan city. A Catholic Education Office administers the Catholic

schools in this diocese in three geographical regions which are areas used for ease of efficient administration. Schools in one region are similar to schools in other regions. Three schools were involved in the data gathering strategies which included semi-structured focus groups, individual interviews, and a documentary analysis.

#### **1.2.4 Data gathering strategies.**

The data gathering strategies adopted for this study are:

- Semi-structured focus groups (n=25 participants)
- Semi-structured interviews (n=2 participants)
- Documentary analysis (3 schools provided documentary evidence)

### **1.3 Significance of the Research**

This study is important for three reasons. First, the concept of the New Evangelisation is complex (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 17) and contested (see Section 3.3). By articulating the current understandings of the New Evangelisation in the Australian educational context, this research may assist in better preparing ecclesial, Catholic educational authorities and teachers to implement it. Second, this study is significant because it offers a voice to teachers in Catholic schools who are entrusted with the implementation of the New Evangelisation. In exploring teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation, this research may better enable ecclesial, Catholic educational authorities and teachers to more fully understand and respond to the complexity of contemporary evangelisation. Finally, while there is some research literature on the New Evangelisation, there is a paucity of research on the implementation of the New Evangelisation in both the educational and Australian context. This study addresses this lacuna.

### **1.4 Outline of the Thesis**

The structure of the thesis is as follows.

**Chapter One: The research problem identified.** The chapter has introduced this study which explores teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.

**Chapter Two: Defining the research problem.** The chapter contextualises the research problem that is explored in this study. An understanding of the context of this study enables the articulation and justification of the research problem to be examined. The research problem investigated in this study is that Australian Catholic schools are

understood by Catholic educational and ecclesial authorities as *Centres of the New Evangelisation* (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). Consequently, teachers in Catholic schools are expected to be the primary conduits for New Evangelisation initiatives. The research problem underpinning this study concerns teachers' understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools.

**Chapter Three: The review of the literature.** The purpose of this chapter is to explore the literature concerning teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools. Through this exploration, research questions which underpin the research are generated.

**Chapter Four: The design of the research.** This chapter explains and justifies the research design, including its theoretical foundations. The research methodology used in the selection of participants is explained and justified. Data gathering strategies, stages of data gathering and the methods used in the analysis of data are discussed, and ethical issues relating to this research are examined.

**Chapter 5: Presentation of the new understandings.** The chapter presents the new understandings generated from the data analysis of the findings from semi-structured interviews, focus groups and documentary analysis. This chapter identifies the researcher's synthesised defensible understandings generated from the multiple and, at times, conflicting understandings of the participants.

**Chapter Six: Discussion of new understandings.** The purpose of this chapter is to discuss selected issues generated from the new understandings presented in Chapter Five. While the research has generated several new understandings, there are three specific issues that invite discussion.

**Chapter Seven:** This final chapter of the thesis generates the conclusion and recommendations generated in the research. This chapter also demonstrates how the study has contributed to the scholarship of the New Evangelisation.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Defining the Research Problem**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the research problem that is explored in this study. An understanding of the context enables the articulation and justification of the research problem.

#### **2.2 Conceptualising the Research Problem**

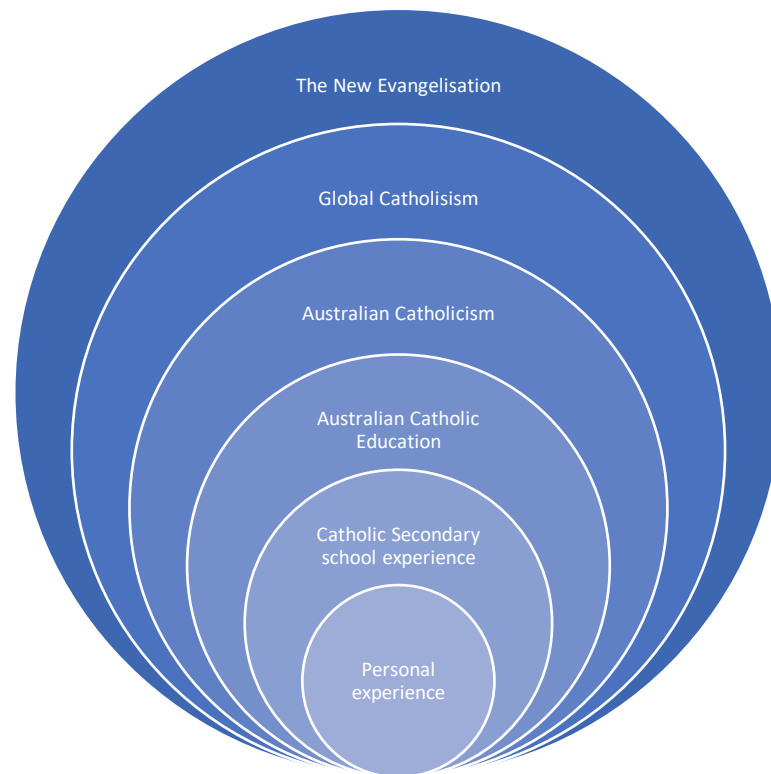
The conceptualisation of the research problem, represented in Figure 2.1, illustrates the concepts that are examined in this chapter. These concepts scaffold the rationale that justifies the research problem.

The research begins with my own story and the context of the Catholic secondary schools in which the research is conducted (see Chapter 1). A presentation of the context of Australian Catholic education (see Section 2.3) contributes to an understanding of the research problem. An exploration of contemporary Australian Catholicism and its global context provides a framework to justify the research problem (see Sections 2.4 & 2.5). Finally, an understanding of the Catholic Church's initiative in promoting the New Evangelisation (see Section 2.6) frames the rationale for the research problem.



**Figure 2.1.**

*Conceptualising the Research Problem*



*Note.* This figure illustrates the progression of the concepts studied in the chapter.

### **2.3 Australian Catholic Education**

Australian Catholic schooling was founded almost 200 years ago, with the first schools conducted by lay Catholics who received limited financial support from the Colonial administration. As the Catholic population increased, so did the establishment of Catholic schools and hospitals. Not surprisingly, from 1848, the Vatican authorised the Australian colonies to have Diocesan status (O'Farrell, 1992).

Paralleling this initiative was the advocacy by colonial politicians for free, secular and compulsory education (Meadmore, 2001). This policy prohibited the financial support of schools sponsored by religious denominations and the initiative became the catalyst for the Australian Catholic Bishops' policy to invite European religious congregations to staff Australian Catholic schools (Dixon, 2015). These religious Sisters and Brothers were foundational to the establishment of Australian Catholic education.

In contemporary Australia, most of the 28 dioceses have their own Catholic Education Agencies employing over 59,000 teachers (National Catholic Education Commission [NCEC], 2016). Table 2.1 presents a statistical overview of Australian Catholic education in the year in which the data was collected.

**Table 2.1**

*Statistical Overview of Australian Catholic Schools, 2014*

	2014	Change in 2014 from 2013
Number of Catholic Schools	1,716	5
Students (Full-Time Equivalent)	747,794	8,636
Primary Students	413,493	4,349
Secondary Students	342,938	4,288
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students	19,995	1,272
Students with a Disability	33,655	1,348
Full-Fee Paying Overseas Students	1,144	-118
Catholic Students	525,917	-160
Non-Catholic Students	231,312	7,728
Staffing (Head Count)		
Total Staff in Catholic Schools	88,791	1,320
Teachers (including Principals)	59,005	234
Non-Teaching Staff	29,786	773
Staffing (Full-Time Equivalent)		
Total Staff in Catholic Schools	70,712	1,268
Teachers (including Principals)	50,848	493
Non-Teaching Staff	19,863	773
School Funding		
Net Recurrent Income per Student (2014)	\$13,181	\$698
Income from Government (Commonwealth and State)	71%	No change
Income from Private Income (Fees and Other Private Income)	29%	No change

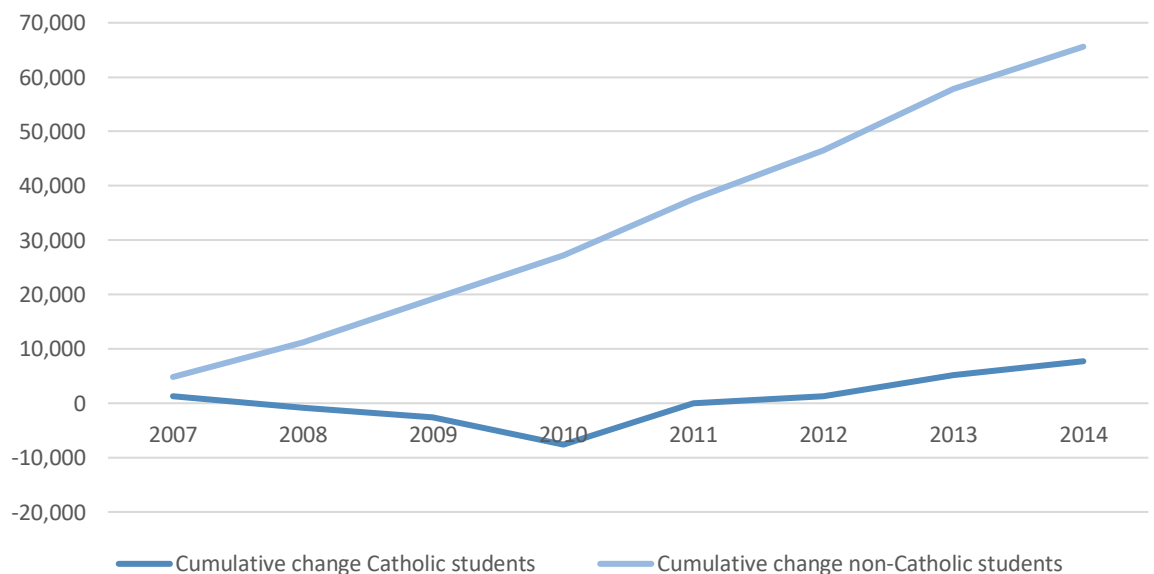
*Note.* This table was developed from information provided in *Australian Catholic Schools 2014* by the National Catholic Education Commission, 2016a. Retrieved from <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/resources/catholic-school-statistics>

Several conclusions may be generated from these data. Australian Catholic education experienced decades of consistent growth. In the thirty years leading up to 2014, the year in which the research was conducted, Catholic school enrolments grew by over 30% (NCEC, 2016a). Ninety per cent of Catholic schools are co-educational and the majority of these are primary schools. While 40% of Catholics schools are located outside the major cities, they enrol 28% of students. Australian Catholic schools educate more than three times the number of Indigenous students than in 1985. The number of students with a disability (SWD) has grown from 0.2% of the student population to 4.4% (NCEC, 2016a). At the time of the data collection, Catholic schools educate 20% of the Australian school-age population.

Moreover, despite the growth in the Catholic school population, there has been a proportional decline in the number of Catholics enrolled in Catholic schools. This phenomenon parallels an increase in the enrolment of non-Catholic students. Figure 2.2 summarises the cumulative growth of enrolments of Catholic and non-Catholic students enrolled from 2006–2013.

**Figure 2.2**

*Cumulative Change in Catholic and Non-Catholic Enrolments, 2006–2013*



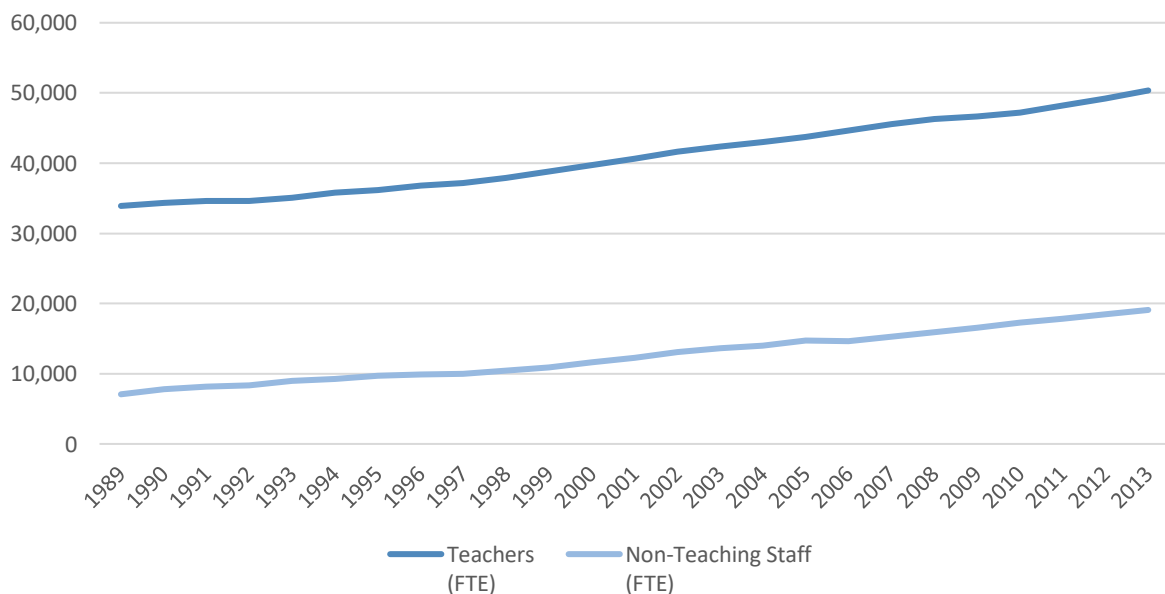
*Note.* The data for this graph showing cumulative change in enrolments of Catholic and non-Catholic students between 2006 and 2013 were drawn from “Catholic Schools Statistics,” in *Australian Catholic Schools 2014* by the National Catholic Education Commission, 2016a. Retrieved from <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/resources/catholic-school-statistics>

From 2006–13, the enrolment of Catholic students increased by 7728. In contrast, 65,594 non-Catholic students were enrolled. There were 31% non-Catholic students enrolled in Australian Catholic schools (NCEC, 2016a). In the Australian state in which this study was conducted, New South Wales, in 2019, 71% of students in Catholic schools identified themselves as Roman Catholic (Catholic Schools NSW, 2019). Moreover, 16% of students in government schools identify as Catholic (Catholic Schools NSW, 2019). Further, 27% of teachers in Australian Catholic schools are not Catholic (NCEC, 2016a). Proportionally, Catholic schools educate more non-Catholic students now than at any time in their history (Sultmann, 2018).

Finally, over 200,000 people are employed by the Catholic Church in Australia in 3,000 agencies (Dixon, McMahon, Reid, Keryk, & Atapattu, 2017). Over 89,000 (45.6%) of them are employed in Catholic Education. Figure 2.3 illustrates the profile of staff in Australian Catholic schools.

**Figure 2.3**

*Teachers and Non-Teaching Staff, Australia, 1989–2014*



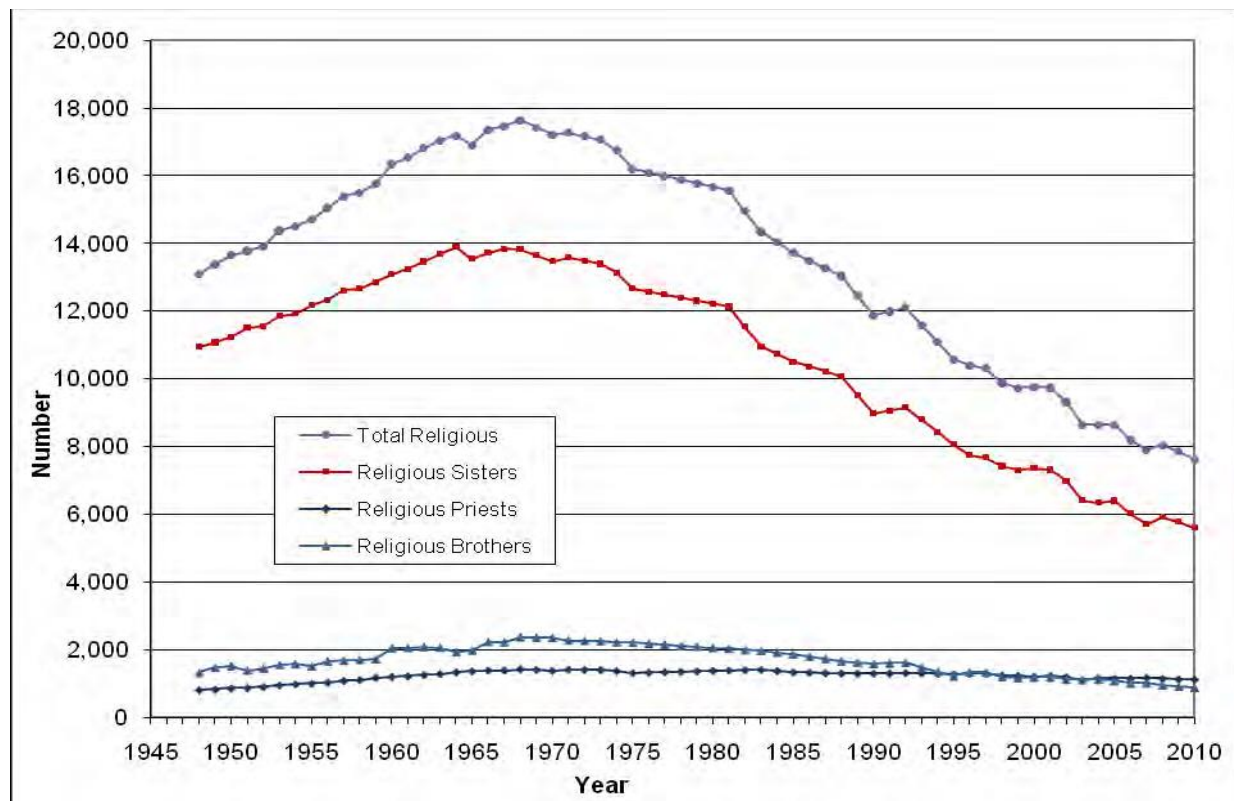
*Note.* Graph indicates the profile of teachers and non-teaching staff in Catholic schools in

Australia, 1989–2014. FTE stands for Full-time Equivalent. Information in this graph came from “Catholic Schools Statistics,” in *Australian Catholic Schools 2014*, by the National Catholic Education Commission, 2016a. Retrieved from <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/resources/catholic-school-statistics>

Further, there has been a substantial decline in the numbers of teaching Sisters and Brothers (Dixon, 2013). This reflects an international phenomenon. The decline in the number of Australian priests and religious is illustrated in Figure 2.4.

**Figure 2.4**

*Australian Religious: 1948–2010*



*Note.* Data were drawn from *Australian Catholics in Changing Times: Learning from the Australian Census and the National Church Life Survey*, a paper presented by R. Dixon at the Voicing the Vision Conference, Australian Catholic University, Sydney, in 2015.

Catholic schools are almost completely staffed by lay personnel and 70% of all teachers are women (NCEC, 2016a, p. 43). Australian Catholic education is characterised by a complex organisation structure, substantial government funding (NCEC, 2016a), and increasing enrolments (Gowdie, 2017). Moreover, for many Australian Catholics, the

Catholic school is their primary experience of contemporary Catholicism (Lee, 2015). Consequently, Australian Catholic education is held in high regard by parents and students (Benjamin, 2010; Flynn & Mok, 2002; McLaughlin, 2000; Rymarz & Graham, 2006).

## 2.4 Australian Catholicism

The presence of Catholicism in Australia began with the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. These first convict Catholics were the basis upon which the Catholic community in Australia established its identity (Dixon, 2005). Indeed, the first Catholic clergy were convicts, exiled to the Sydney penal system because of their involvement in the 1798 Irish Rebellion. Despite the initial lack of recognition of the Catholic presence by British authorities, the first Catholic priest was sponsored by the government in the 1820s in order to address the lack of morality among the supposedly depraved Irish (Rees, 2001). The first Catholic church was opened for worship in 1836. Roman Catholicism is Australia’s largest religious denomination, representing 22.6% of the population (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2017b).

An analysis of the data generates several trends. First, Australian religious affiliation has altered considerably since the first Australian census in 1911 (Dixon, 2005). In 1911, 96% of the Australian population identified as Christian. Table 2.2 illustrates the changes to Australian religious affiliation in the period from 1966 to 2016.

**Table 2.2**

*Australian Religious Affiliation 1966–2016*

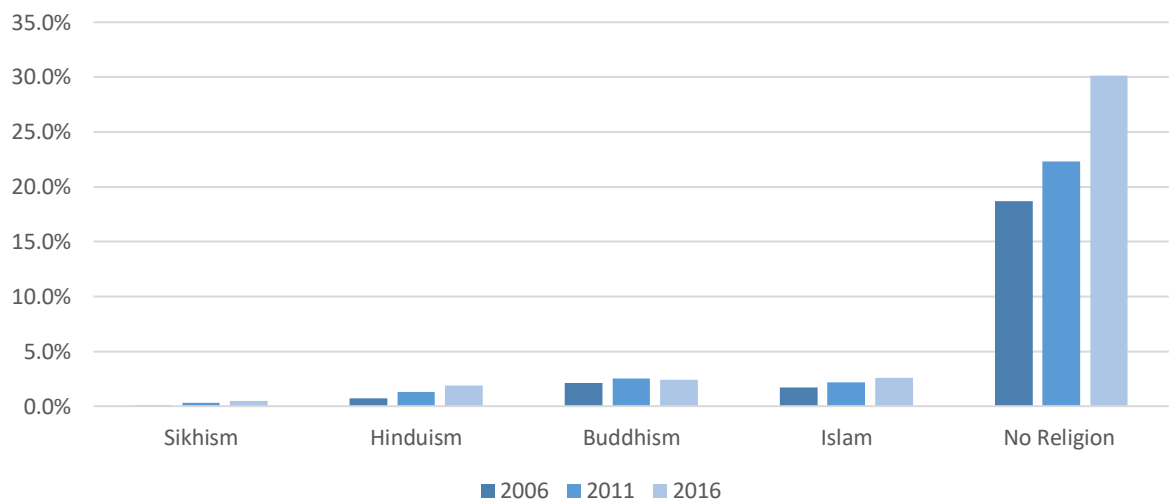
Years	1966	1991	2016
Christian	88.2%	74.0%	52.7%
Other Religions	0.7%	2.6%	8.2%
No Religion	0.8%	12.9%	30.1%

*Note.* Data was drawn from “Religious Affiliation Over Time - 1966, 1991, 2016,” *Census of Population and Housing, Main Features - Religion Data Summary* by the (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017c) 2017c. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Religion%20Data%20Summary~70>

In contrast, 2017 data indicate that Christian affiliation in Australia is declining. Moreover, by 2050, Christianity is projected to decline to 47% of the population (Hackett, Stonawski, Potancokova, Grim, & Skirbekk, 2015). In addition, there has been an increase in Australians professing a religion other than Christianity from 2006–2016 as shown in Figure 2.5.

**Figure 2.5**

*Emerging Major Religions, Australian Census 2006–2016*



*Note.* Data was drawn from “Emerging Major Religions, 2006–2016,” *Census of Population and Housing, Main Features - Religion Data Summary* by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017c. The percentages are as a proportion of the total population. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Religion%20Data%20Summary~70>

Over 30% of Australians classify themselves as professing no religion (ABS, 2017b). The number of religiously unaffiliated people, especially among young adults, is increasing. There is an indisputable trend of religiously disaffiliated and/or de-identified Australians (Hackett, Stonawski, Potancokova, Grim, & Skirbekk, 2015). The conclusion is that Australians are more religiously diverse, less Christian than before and more inclined to identify as religiously unaffiliated.

Second, since 1996, the nature of the Australian Catholic population has altered. In 2016, 23.4 million people (22.6%) identified as Roman Catholic (ABS, 2017b). The changes in the Australian Catholic demography since 1996 to 2016 are illustrated in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3***Australian Catholic Demography: 1996–2016*

	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016
Total population	17,752,089	18,767,249	19,855,287	21,507,719	23,401,892
Catholic population	4,799,090	5,001,624	5,126,862	5,439,267	5,291,834
Percentage Catholic	27	26.6	25.8	25.3	22.6
Median age (years)	33	34	37	38	40
Aged 0-14 (%)	23	22.3	21.1	20.5	19.8
Aged 65+ (%)	10.9	12	13.2	14.1	16.6
Born in Australia (%)	74.6	74.1	74.7	74.7	73.6
Born overseas in English speaking country (%)	4.9	5	5.1	5.7	5.6
Born in non-English speaking country (%)	18.9	17.9	17.6	17.9	19.1
Indigenous Australians	81,265	94,556	101,113	124,610	133,528

*Note.* Data drawn from *Census of Population and Housing: Australia Revealed, 2016* by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017a. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2024.0>

Two trends emerge from these data. First, the percentage of Australian Roman Catholics has declined since its peak of 27%. Further, the Australian Catholic population expanded by 10% while the Australian population grew by 32%, 2011–2016 (ABS, 2017c). Second, the age profile of the Australian Catholic population has altered since 2001. This is further illustrated in Table 2.4.



**Table 2.4***Australian Catholic Population: Age Profile %, 2001–2016*

Age	2001	2006	2011	2016
0–14	22.2	21.1	20.5	19.8
15–24	13.9	13.8	13.4	12.5
25–34	14.3	12.7	12.5	12.1
35–44	15.3	15	14.2	13
45–54	13	13.5	14	14
55–64	9.3	10.7	11.3	11.9
65–74	6.9	7.2	7.7	9.1
75–84	4	4.7	4.8	5.3
85+	1.1	1.3	1.7	2.1

*Note.* This table was developed from material drawn from *Census of Population and Housing: Australia Revealed, 2016* by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017a.

Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2024.0>

The number of Australian Catholics aged over 65 has increased and under 14 years of age declined. In 2016, 28.6 % of the Australian Catholic population is aged over 55. Additionally, 25% of Australian Catholics are born overseas (Pastoral Research Office [PRO], 2017b). Traditionally, Italian-born Catholics represented the largest overseas-born group of Catholics (PRO, 2017a). In contrast, by 2016, Catholics born in the Philippines (81%) or India (76%) have replaced the Italian precedence of overseas born Catholics (ABS, 2017a). To summarise, there is a declining Australian Catholic population which is also older and more ethnically diverse.

Third, the nature of Australian Catholic religious practice has altered. Traditionally, the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist or Mass and the reception of the Sacraments in the Catholic parish define Catholic practices (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2016 No. 2179 ). The data indicate that a decreasing number of Australian Catholics honour this tradition. In 2019, 11.8% of the Australian Catholic population attend Mass on a typical weekend (PRO, 2019). Table 2.5 illustrates the declining rate of Mass attendance among Australian Catholics.

**Table 2.5***Australian Catholic Population and Regular Mass Attendance, 1947–2011*

Year	Catholic Population	Catholics regularly attending Mass	Percentage attending
1947	1,584,094	998,000	63%
1954	2,060,986	1,525,129	74%
1961	2,616,541	1,386,700	53%
1978	3,605,098	1,081,529	30%
1996	4,799,000	864,000	17.9%
2001	5,001,624	764,310	15.3%
2006	5,126,884	708,618	13.8%
2011	5,439,268	662, 376	12.2%
2016	5,291, 817	623, 356	11.8%

*Note.* This table was developed from material drawn from *Pastoral Research Online* by the Pastoral Research Office, 2019. Retrieved from <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Pastoral-Research-Online-Edition-44-April-2019.pdf#page=2>

The data indicate that the average age of Mass attenders is 59 years. (PRO, 2017a). Men are under-represented in all age groups and those people attending Mass regularly are more diverse, culturally and linguistically, than in previous decades (Dixon, Reid, & Chee, 2013).

Further, Australian Catholic sacramental practice is also declining. From 1993–2013, new membership of the Australian Catholic Church declined by 8% (PRO, 2016). During the same period, the number of civil marriages increased from 43% to 74%, while the number of those married in the Roman Catholic Church declined by 24% (PRO, 2016). Finally, of the 12% of Catholics who do attend Mass, 33% do not engage with the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Dixon & Reid, 2013b).

In summary, Catholic sacramental practices are declining, and a small minority of Australian Catholics attend Sunday Mass. Those who do worship weekly are older, more diverse both culturally and linguistically, and more likely to be female.

Finally, the data suggest that, for many Australian Catholics, Catholicism lacks relevance and credibility. The reasons for this are twofold. First, a declining percentage of

Australian Catholics accept the beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church. This is illustrated in Table 2.6.

**Table 2.6**

*Mass Attenders' Acceptance of Catholic Moral Teachings and Beliefs, 1996–2011*

	15–35(%)	35–59(%)	60 & over (%)	All Mass attenders (%)
<b>Abortion always morally wrong, or justified only in extreme circumstances</b>				
1996	82	90	94	90
2001	83	88	95	90
2006	85	87	94	90
2011	78	84	88	85
<b>Premarital sex always morally wrong</b>				
1996	28	46	74	52
2001	30	41	68	49
2006	32	38	58	46
2011	33	34	50	41
<b>There is one God, three divine persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit</b>				
1996	63	73	84	75
2001	64	71	79	73
2006	83	84	88	86
2011	76	83	87	84
<b>Mary gave birth to Jesus without having had sexual intercourse</b>				
1996	63	65	79	69
2001	75	74	82	77
2006	81	74	80	78
2011	74	72	78	75

Eucharist: the consecrated bread and wine truly become the sacred Body and Blood of Christ

1996	-	-	-	-
2001	60	72	85	75
2006	84	90	94	91
2011	81	90	92	90
Christ was raised by God's power from death to life - really, bodily, physically				
1996	77	85	86	83
2001	81	86	90	87
2006	74	73	77	75
2011	69	70	73	71

*Note.* This table was developed from material drawn from “What Do Mass Attenders Believe?” by R. Dixon, 2013, *Australasian Catholic Record*, 90(4), pp. 439–458.

The data indicate that between 1996 and 2011, fewer Mass-attending Australian Catholics accept the Catholic Church’s teaching on abortion, pre-marital sex or the Resurrection of Jesus. In comparison, Table 2.7 illustrates the reasons Australian Catholic parents have ceased attending Mass.

**Table 2.7***Reasons Catholic Parents of Children Attending Catholic Schools Have Ceased Attending Mass*

Reason	Percentage	Percentage selecting this as the most important reason
Married to a non-Catholic	17	4
In an irregular marriage situation	7	3
Disagreement with the Church's teaching on, or attitude to, personal sexual issues	31	9
Disagreement with the Church's teaching on abortion	12	1
No longer accept many Catholic beliefs	18	9
Religion no longer necessary for meaning or security	6	2
Weekends taken up with playing sport or taking children to activities	16	4
Weekend work	14	3
Weekends the only time available for being with the family	23	8
Weekends the only time available for household chores	11	2
Disillusionment with the Church because of revelation of sexual abuse by Church personnel	22	7
No longer feel that being a committed Catholic requires going to Mass every week	54	32
Mass no longer important as a way of socialising	3	0
Seriously offended against in the past by a priest, brother or nun	5	2
Mass holds little or no meaning for me	16	7
Boring or irrelevant homilies	10	2
Don't get on with the priest(s) in the parish	2	1
Don't know many others in the parish	3	1
Australian Church doesn't do enough for justice and the poor	5	1
Some other reason	11	3

*Note.* (N=4,457). This table was developed from material drawn from *Catholics Who Have Stopped Attending Mass* by R. Dixon, S. Bond, K. Engebretson, R. Rymarz, B. Cussen and K. Wright, 2007, retrieved from

<http://www.pro.catholic.org.au/pdf/DCReport.pdf> and “Who Goes to Mass in Australia in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?” by P. Wilkinson, 2013, *Catholica*, retrieved from [http://www.catholica.com.au/gc4/pw/005\\_pw\\_print.php](http://www.catholica.com.au/gc4/pw/005_pw_print.php)

These data indicate that Catholic parents have ceased attending Mass and do not accept the Church’s teaching regarding worship attendance or personal sexuality. The incongruity between the priorities and teachings of the Catholic Church and the lived experience of Australian Catholics was particularly evident during the Australian postal survey in 2017 to gauge public opinion about whether to legitimise same-sex marriage (Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee, 2018). Overall, the data indicate the increasing irrelevance of some Catholic beliefs and practices in the lives of Australian Catholics (Dixon et al., 2007; Tacey, 2019).

Second, the credibility of the Australian Catholic Church has been scrutinised during the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA; Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Response, 2017). The ARCIRCSA, which ran from 2013 to 2017, revealed the history of widespread child sexual abuse within the Australian Catholic Church which has been the source of the majority of child sexual abuse reports exposed (Doyle, 2017). What was especially reprehensible was that this abuse was conducted by Catholic clergy and religious. Moreover, some Church leaders supported the perpetrators by engaging in cover-up practices, ignoring responsibility to victims and obligations of the civil law. The Royal Commission identified the inadequacies and failures of Church authorities in their response to child sexual abuse within the Church. Forty-nine percent of Mass attenders indicated that the revelations of the ARCIRCSA had damaged their confidence in Church leadership. Fifty-four percent criticised the Church’s inadequate responses to child abuse (Powell, Pepper, & Hancock, 2016).

In summary, the Australian population is becoming less Christian. Australian Catholics are ageing and declining in number while fewer are attending Mass and engaging in the Sacramental practice. Fewer Australian Catholics experience the Catholic Church as credible or its beliefs and practices as relevant.

## **2.5 Global Catholicism**

Christianity is the world’s largest religion. Roman Catholicism is the world’s largest Christian denomination and includes the Western (or Latin) Church and 22

Eastern Catholic churches (Pew Research Center, 2013). During the period in which the research was conducted, the global Roman Catholic population expanded to 1.2 billion people, 18% of the world’s population, as shown in Table 2.8.

**Table 2.8**

*2014–15 World Population–Catholics*

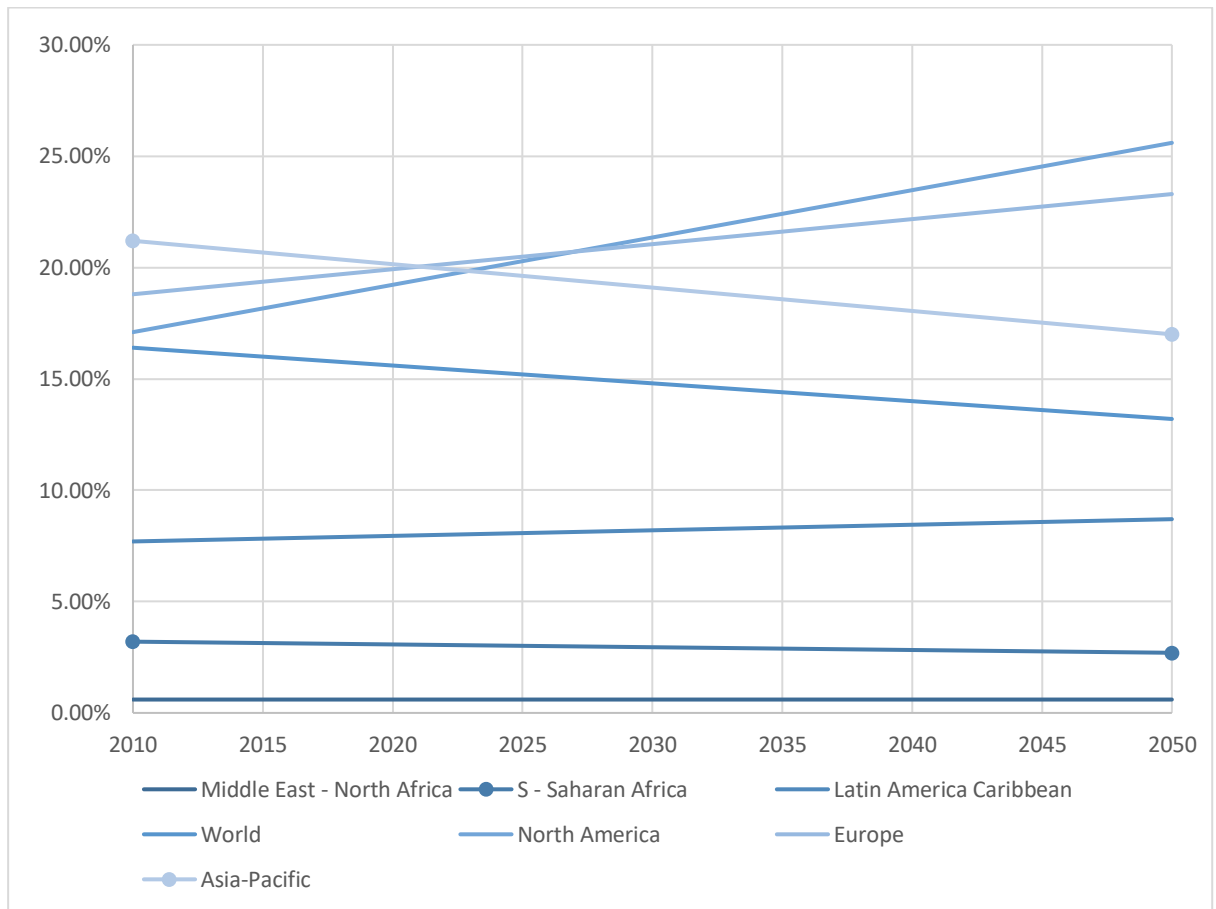
Continent	World Population	Variation	Roman Catholic Population	Variation
Africa	1,144.2	+ 31.2	222	+ 7
America	982.2	+ 8.7	625	+ 4.7
Asia	4,367	+ 47. 6	141.4	+ 1.6
Europe	716.7	+ 0.4	285.7	- 1.3
Oceania	38.8	+ 0.1	10.2	+ 0.1
Total	7,249	+88	1,284.8	+ 12.5

*Note.* The figures in the Population columns are calculated as Millions: 000,000. Data in this table were drawn from website of *Frequently Requested Church Statistics* by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2016. Retrieved from <https://cara.georgetown.edu/frequently-requested-church-statistics/>

Four trends further explain the nature of contemporary Catholicism. Trend one illustrates the nature of the global Catholic population. Roman Catholicism is experiencing one of its greatest population expansions in its history (Allen, 2009) and this growth in the global Catholic population is due primarily to the increase in the Christian population in the global South, especially in Africa. It is anticipated that by 2050, three quarters of the world’s Roman Catholics will live in the developing world (Bellofatto & Johnson, 2013). In contrast, the Catholic population in Europe and the developed world is declining (Hajkowicz, Cook, & Littleboy, 2012). This decline coincides with the projected increase of religiously unaffiliated people in the developed world as shown in Figure 2.6.

**Figure 2.6**

*Projected Change in Religiously Unaffiliated Populations, 2010–2050*



*Note.* Projected change in religiously unaffiliated populations, 2010–2050, where the religiously unaffiliated are projected to decline as a share of the world’s population in the decades ahead. Data in this figure was drawn from “The Future Size of Religiously Affiliated and Unaffiliated Populations,” by C. Hackett, M. Stonawski, M. Potancokova, B, J, Grim, & V. Skirbekk, 2015, *Demographic Research*, 32, Article 27, p. 836.

These data suggest that by 2050, more people in the developed world will be religiously unaffiliated. Consequently, fewer will identify as Catholic.

Trend two identifies the changes in global Catholic organisations. The Roman Catholic church is one of the world’s largest institutions (Casanova, 2018). Table 2.9 illustrates the change in Catholic agencies since 1970.



**Table 2.9***Changes in Roman Catholicism, 1970–2016*

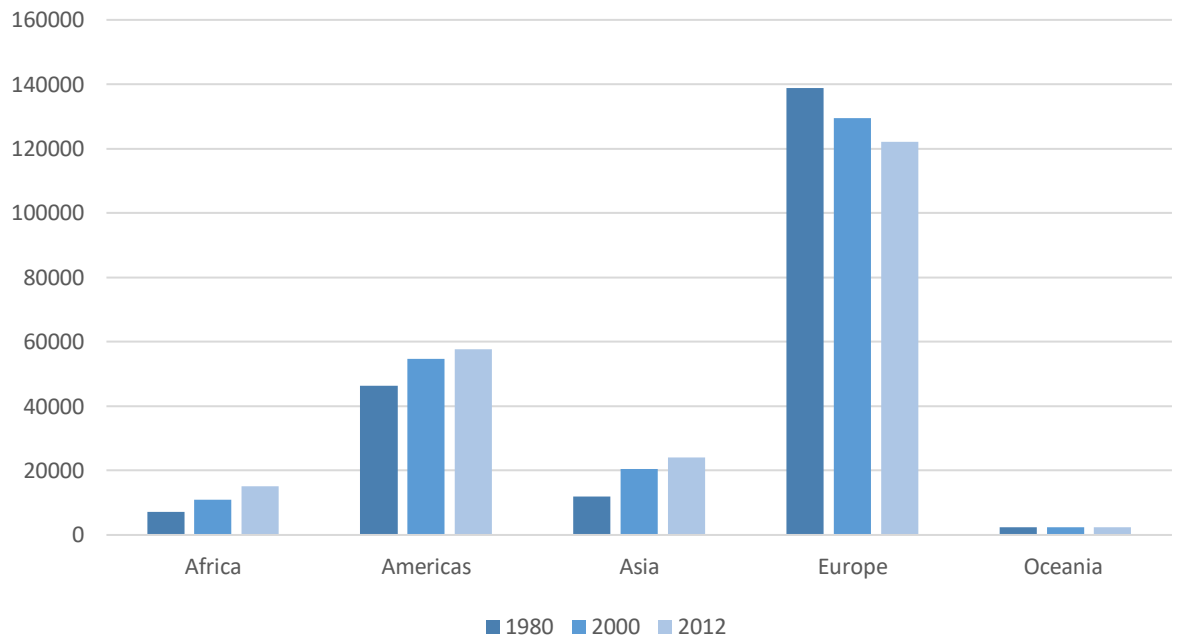
	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2016
<i>Total priests</i>	419,728	404,783	413,600	403,480	403,173	404,750	405,178	406,411	412,236	414,969
<i>Diocesan priests</i>	270,924	259,331	257,409	253,319	257,696	262,418	265,781	269,762	277,009	281,831
<i>Religious priests</i>	148,804	145,452	156,191	150,161	145,477	142,332	139,397	136,649	135,227	133,138
<i>Diocesan priestly ordinations</i>	4,622	4,140	3,860	4,822	5,938	6,444	6,814	6,614	6,863	5,931
<i>Permanent deacons</i>	309	2,686	7,654	12,541	17,525	22,390	27,824	33,391	39,564	45,609
<i>Religious sisters</i>	1,004,304	968,526	960,991	917,432	882,111	837,961	801,185	760,529	721,935	659,445
<i>Religious brothers</i>	79,408	70,388	73,090	65,208	62,526	59,515	55,057	54,708	54,665	52,625
<i>Parishes</i>	191,398	200,116	206,503	212,021	215,805	220,077	218,196	217,616	221,055	222,514
<i>Parishes without a resident priest pastor</i>	39,431	46,074	50,469	55,343	57,664	60,705	55,729	52,509	49,172	47,036
<i>Catholic population</i>	653.6m	709.6m	783.7m	852.0m	928.5m	989.4m	1.045b	1.115b	1.196b	1.299b
<i>Percent of world population</i>	18%	17%	18%	18%	18%	17%	17%	17%	18%	18%
<i>Catholic elementary schools</i>	89,112	79,424	75,454	78,160	78,548	85,043	89,457	91,480	92,847	96,573
<i>Students in Catholic elementary schools</i>	20.396m	19.584m	20.661m	22.390m	24.145m	25.246m	26.097m	28.084m	31.151m	35.125m
<i>Catholic secondary schools</i>	25,552	27,542	29,637	30,404	31,200	33,349	35,559	39,096	43,591	47,862
<i>Students in Catholic secondary schools</i>	7.667m	9.522m	11.015m	12.066m	12.441m	13.232m	14.027m	16.232m	17.794m	19.956m
<i>Baptisms of infants to age 7</i>	14.795m	15.553m	16.410m	16.119m	16.252m	15.867m	15.690m	14.448m	14.283m	13.290m
<i>Baptisms of those ages 8 and older</i>	1.120m	990,727	1.131m	1.580m	1.879m	2.173m	2.718m	2.554m	2.667m	2.933m
<i>Marriages between two Catholics</i>	3.306m	3.725m	3.821m	3.707m	3.633m	3.322m	3.433m	2.791m	2.712m	2.209m
<i>Marriages between a Catholic and a non-Catholic</i>	360,466	353,702	335,802	328,457	347,206	311,287	297,915	262,230	247,228	224,823
<i>First Communions</i>	--	--	--	--	11.329m	11.600m	12.237m	11.611m	10.728m	10.067m
<i>Catholic hospitals</i>	--	--	6,700	6,056	5,675	5,482	5,853	5,246	5,305	5,287
<i>Catholic orphanages</i>	--	--	6,185	6,988	6,650	7,554	8,695	9,616	9,882	9,552

*Note.* This table was developed from material drawn from *Annuario Pontificio 2017*, by the Secretariat of State of the Holy See.

The changes identified in this period of are twofold. First, since 1970 the number of Catholic parishes, schools, hospitals and welfare agencies has increased. Second, the number of priests and Religious sisters and brothers has declined in this period. The Church's endeavours have been maintained by a workforce which is traditionally comprised of lay, clerical and Religious women and men (*Annuario Pontificio, 2017*). These trends indicate an incongruity in the Catholic Church. While Catholic agencies have expanded, these organisations rely less on priests or Religious women and men to operate. Third, since 1970, the number of Catholic parishes throughout the world has increased. However, the number of parishes without a priest has also increased in this period. Figure 2.7 illustrates the growth trends of parishes across five global regions.

**Figure 2.7**

*Catholic Parishes, 1980–2012*



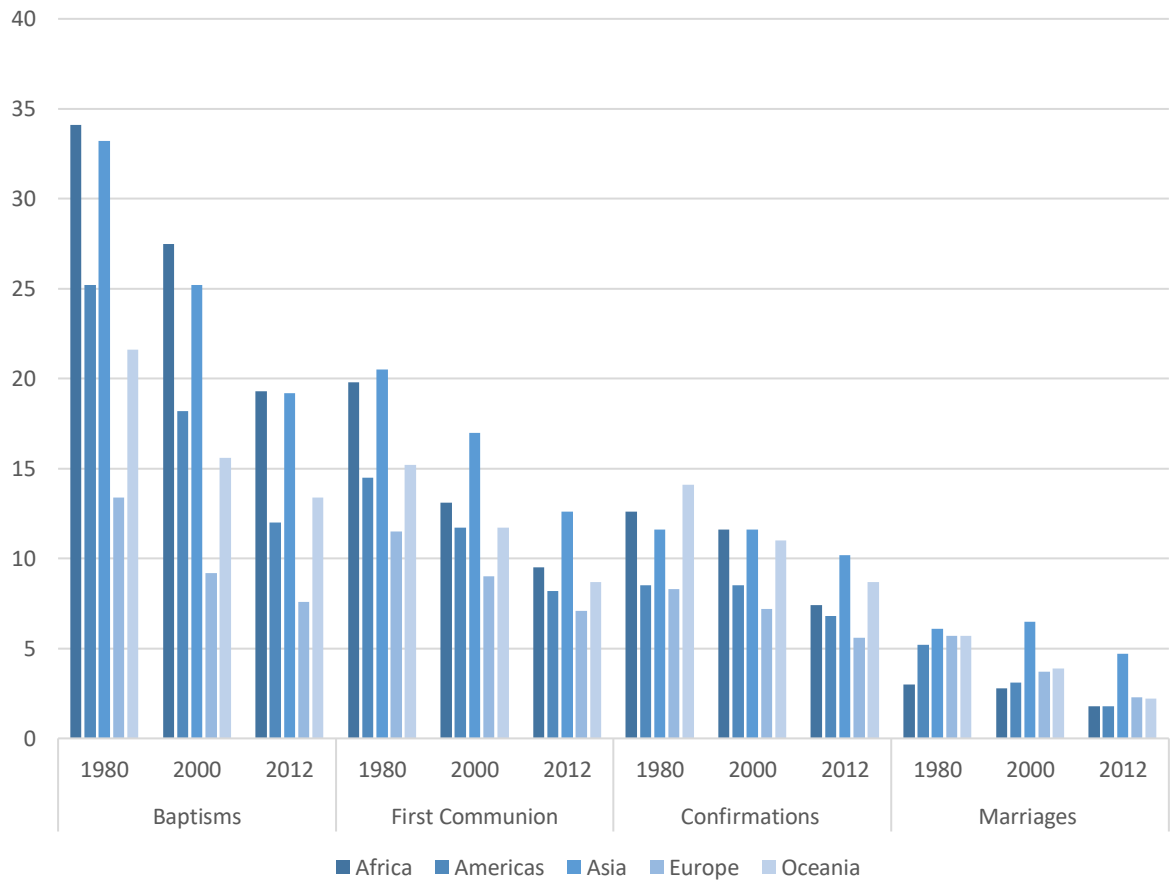
*Note.* Adapted from *Global Catholicism: Trends & Forecasts, 2015*, by (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2015)p. 5. Retrieved from <https://cara.georgetown.edu/staff/webpages/Global%20Catholicism%20Release.pdf>

The data indicate that since 1980, the number of Catholic parishes in Africa and Asia has more than doubled. In contrast, during the same time, there has been a marginal expansion in the number of parishes in the Americas and Oceania. However, corresponding to its declining Catholic population, the number of parishes in Europe has been reduced. Overall therefore, while there are more Catholic parishes in the world, more function without a priest. Moreover, fewer parishes exist in Europe than in 1970.

Finally, Catholic sacramental participation has declined since 1970 (Table 2.9). This alteration is further illustrated in Figure 2.8.

**Figure 2.8**

*Sacramental Practice per 1000 Catholics, 1980–2012*

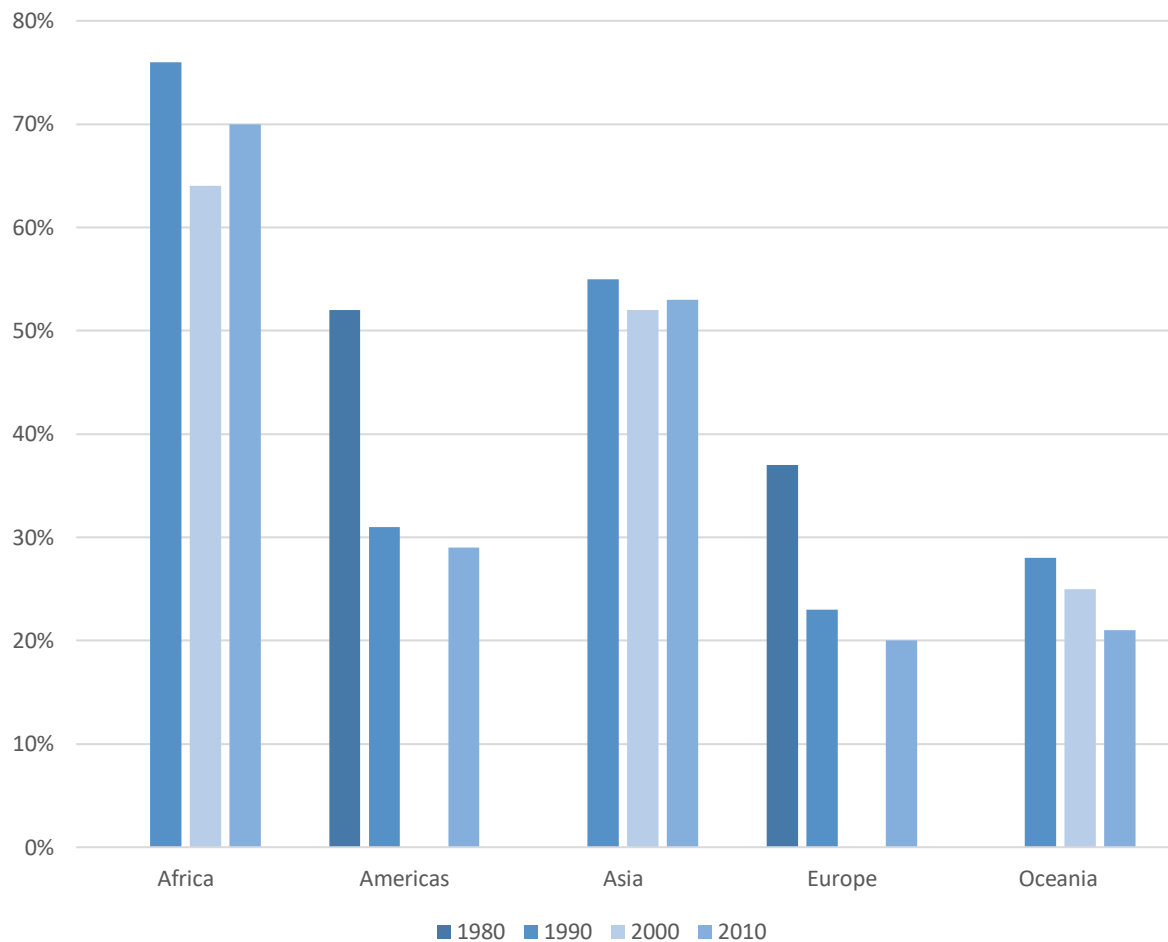


*Note.* Data for this figure was drawn from *Global Catholicism: Trends & Forecasts, 2015*, by (Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2015)pp. 14, 22, 30, 38, 46. Retrieved from <https://cara.georgetown.edu/staff/webpages/Global%20Catholicism%20Release.pdf>

The data indicate that since 1980, fewer people in every global region are being baptised as Catholics or participate in the sacraments of First Communion, Confirmation or Marriage. Similarly, weekly Mass attendance has also declined since 1980 as shown in Figure 2.9.

**Figure 2.9**

*Weekly Mass Attendance, 1980–2010*



*Note.* Data for this figure was drawn from *Global Catholicism: Trends & Forecasts*, 2015, by Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2015, pp. 10, 18, 26, 34, and 42. Retrieved from

<https://cara.georgetown.edu/staff/webpages/Global%20Catholicism%20Release.pdf>

Attendance rates at Sunday Mass have declined in all global regions. Africa (76–70%) and Asia (55–53%) experienced a marginal decline in weekly Mass attendance since 1990. Since 1980, weekly Mass attendance has declined from 37% to 20% in Europe and from 52% to 29% in the Americas. Therefore, despite the growth in the global Catholic population, traditional Catholic sacramental practice has declined.

Overall, despite the growth of the global Roman Catholic population, especially in developing nations, the number of Catholic parishes in the world has declined. Fewer priests and Religious women and men minister in the Church. Fewer Catholics attend weekly Eucharist or participate in the Sacraments. Further, in the developed world, Christianity lacks relevancy for many people, including Catholics (Beaton, 2019). This

situation is exacerbated by the declining credibility of the institutional Catholic Church because of the revelations of historical child sexual abuse by clergy and religious and the subsequent concealment of these crimes by the institutional Church.

This context is problematic for the institutional Catholic Church. In response, the Church has developed the concept of the New Evangelisation. An examination of the development of this concept and its prioritisation by the Australian Catholic Church enables the identification of the research problem.

## **2.6 The New Evangelisation**

The New Evangelisation has its genesis in the historical, sociological and religious changes of the twentieth century (Taylor, 2007). In response to these circumstances, Pope John XXIII convened the Second Vatican Council in 1962 (Pope John XXIII, 1962) and it concluded in 1965. He perceived the need for a new enthusiasm for the Good News (Pope John XXIII, 1962). The Conciliar and Post Conciliar documents of the Council (Flannery, 1987) indicate the urgency of the task of contemporary evangelisation in response “to the signs of the times” (Pope Paul VI, 1965a, No. 4). As the legacy of the Second Vatican Council has unfolded, the official teachings of the Church on evangelisation have also evolved.

A decade after the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI issued a pioneering document on evangelisation in the modern world, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Pope Paul VI, 1975). Pope Paul VI affirmed that “the Church exists to evangelise” (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 14). Moreover, he identified the purpose of contemporary evangelisation:

For the Church, evangelising means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence, transforming humanity from within and making it new: "Now I am making the whole of creation new." But there is no new humanity if there are not first of all new persons renewed by Baptism and by lives lived according to the Gospel. The purpose of Evangelisation is therefore precisely this interior change, and if it had to be expressed in one sentence the best way of stating it would be to say that the Church evangelises when she seeks to convert, solely through the divine power of the message she proclaims, both the personal and collective consciences of people, the activities in which they engage, and the lives and concrete milieu which are theirs. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 18)

*Evangelii Nuntiandi* clarifies the purpose of evangelisation as the conversion of both individuals and whole societies to Christianity. It identifies a twofold audience for contemporary evangelisation. The first is the evangelisation of people and societies where Jesus and the Gospel are unknown (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 52). This first evangelisation was traditionally the responsibility of missionaries in the Catholic Church. The second audience are baptised Catholics who no longer engage with the Church:

Today there is a very large number of baptised people who for the most part have not formally renounced their Baptism but who are entirely indifferent to it and not living in accordance with it. The phenomenon of the non-practicing is a very ancient one in the history of Christianity... Today however it shows certain new characteristics. It is often the result of the uprooting typical of our time. It also springs from the fact that Christians live in close proximity with non-believers and constantly experience the effects of unbelief. Furthermore, the non-practicing Christians of today, more so than those of previous periods, seek to explain and justify their position in the name of an interior religion, of personal independence or authenticity. Thus, we have atheists and unbelievers on the one side and those who do not practice on the other, and both groups put up a considerable resistance to Evangelisation... Atheistic secularism and the absence of religious practice are found among adults and among the young, among the leaders of society and among the ordinary people, at all levels of education, and in both the old Churches and the young ones. The Church's evangelising action cannot ignore these two worlds, nor must it come to a standstill when faced with them; it must constantly seek the proper means and language for presenting, or representing, to them God's revelation and faith in Jesus Christ. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 56)

Subsequently, Pope John Paul II (1978–2005) amplified the concept of evangelisation (Brown & O' Reilly, 2017). He introduced a novel term, New Evangelisation, when he addressed the Catholic Bishops of Latin America in 1983. He challenged their commitment to engage with a new evangelisation:

The commemoration of this half millennium of Evangelisation (in Latin America) will have full significance if, as bishops, with your priests and faithful, you accept it as your commitment; a commitment not of re-Evangelisation, but rather of a

new Evangelisation; new in its ardour, methods and expression. (Pope John Paul II, 1983, as cited in 1993, para. 3)

The development of the concept of the New Evangelisation during this period is threefold. First, Pope John Paul II encouraged an enthusiasm for the New Evangelisation within the Church. Second, encouraged by this prioritisation, the Church called for the need for new strategies of evangelisation to be employed to effectively evangelise people in a post-modern context (Arbuckle, 2013). Finally, the Church identified a specific audience for the New Evangelisation. In the Encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio* (Pope John Paul II, 1991), the Church reiterated the need for the ongoing evangelisation of “peoples, groups, and socio-cultural contexts in which Christ and his Gospel are not known” and Christian communities “with adequate and solid ecclesial structures” (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33). However, *Redemptoris Missio* also identified non-practising Christians as the chief priority for the New Evangelisation:

...there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptised have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a "new Evangelisation" or a "re-Evangelisation". (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33)

Consequently, it emerged that the priority for the New Evangelisation is Catholics who had discontinued their affiliation with the Church. Therefore, the audience for the New Evangelisation is specifically non-practising Catholics in developed nations, such as Australia. The aim of the New Evangelisation is to re-engage these Catholics with the Church through new strategies and the renewed commitment of the Church to their evangelisation (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 38, 2001, No. 14).

The prioritisation and ongoing development of the New Evangelisation continued during the papacy of Benedict XVI (2005–13). During this period, the Church emphasised the necessity of a personal encounter with Christ as fundamental to the New Evangelisation (Pope Benedict XVI, 2006). Further, Pope Benedict encouraged the re-propositioning of the Gospel to those still awaiting a first evangelisation (Pope Benedict XVI, 2011) and non-practising Christians in secularised nations as elemental to the New Evangelisation (Pope Benedict XVI, 2010). To further the aims of the New



Evangelisation, the Church established the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation in 2010 and convened the first Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelisation in 2012.

Since 2013, Pope Francis has further refined the concept of the New Evangelisation. In his first Encyclical, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Pope Francis, 2013), Pope Francis indicated that the imperative of the New Evangelisation requires a “missionary transformation” (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 11) of the Church itself:

I want to emphasise that what I am trying to express here has a programmatic significance and important consequences. I hope that all communities will devote the necessary effort to advancing along the path of a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are. “Mere administration” can no longer be enough. Throughout the world, let us be “permanently in a state of mission”. (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 25)

Consequently, the current vision of the New Evangelisation is understood by the Church to encompass its ongoing conversion. The New Evangelisation therefore requires that:

...the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the Evangelisation of today’s world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with himself. (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 27)

The urgency of the mission of evangelisation in the context of the renewal of the entire Catholic Church characterises Pope Francis’ understanding of the New Evangelisation (Dormor & Harris, 2016).

While the Catholic Church has prioritised the New Evangelisation, the meaning of the New Evangelisation is contested and continues to be deliberated upon by Church personnel and Church agencies (Sultmann & Brown, 2014). Further, the implementation of the New Evangelisation in diverse cultural and religious contexts is evolving (Catholic

Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). However, understanding and implementing the New Evangelisation remains an imperative for the Catholic Church. This is particularly so in Australia because of the increased percentage of non-practising Catholics. It is these Catholics who are the primary focus of the New Evangelisation.

## **2.7 The New Evangelisation and Australia**

In 1998, the priority of the New Evangelisation in Australia was emphasised during the Synod of the Catholic Bishops of Oceania (Synod of Bishops of Oceania, 1998, Nos. 20-21). Subsequently, Pope John Paul II identified the need in Oceania for “a representation of the Gospel (by) new ways and methods of evangelisation, inspired by deeper faith, hope and love of the Lord Jesus” (Pope John Paul II, 2001, No. 18). The reasons for this imperative are outlined by Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Oceania*:

A large part of Oceania, particularly Australia and New Zealand, has entered upon an era marked by increasing secularisation. In civic life, religion, and especially Christianity, is moved to the margin and tends to be regarded as a strictly private matter for the individual with little relevance to public life. Religious convictions and the insights of faith are at times denied their due role in forming people's consciences. Likewise, the Church and other religious bodies have a diminished voice in public affairs. In today's world, more advanced technology, greater knowledge of human nature and behaviour, and worldwide political and economic developments pose new and difficult questions for the peoples of Oceania. In presenting Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life, the Church must respond in new and effective ways to these moral and social questions without ever allowing her voice to be silenced or her witness to be marginalised. (Pope John Paul II, 2001, No. 7)

Further, *Ecclesia in Oceania* indicated the importance of Catholic schools' contributions to the New Evangelisation agenda. The significance of the Catholic school in the New Evangelisation is threefold. First, Catholic schools in Oceania have been successful and have contributed effectively to the evangelising mission of the Church (Pope John Paul II, 2001, No. 33). The effectiveness of Catholic schools is one of the “jewels in the crown” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital

Territory, 2007, p. 6) of the Catholic community in Oceania. Second, the Catholic school is integral to the evangelising mission of the Church (Pope John Paul II, 2001, No. 22). In partnership with the broader Catholic community, the Catholic school is an essential agency for evangelisation. Finally, teachers in Catholic schools are integral to the New Evangelisation:

The identity and success of Catholic education is linked inseparably to the witness of life given by the teaching staff....School staff who truly live their faith will be agents of a new Evangelisation in creating a positive climate for the Christian faith to grow and in spiritually nourishing the students entrusted to their care. (Pope John Paul II, 2001, No. 33)

Subsequently, in 2007, the Catholic bishops in the region in which this study was conducted committed Catholic schools to being “centres of the new evangelisation” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 6). The implications of this commitment are twofold. First, goals were established for Catholic schools to become “centres of new evangelisation” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 18). Second, teachers in Catholic schools are understood to be such agents of the New Evangelisation as described by Pope John Paul II (2001).

## **2.8 Defining the Research Problem**

Australian Catholic schools have the responsibility to implement the New Evangelisation. Teachers in these schools are understood to be agents of the New Evangelisation. However, many teachers in Catholic schools have a tenuous relationship with the Church. They may no longer believe in Catholic teaching or accept the authority of the Church to influence personal decision-making. Moreover, many teachers are not Catholic. This is the problem that underpins this research thesis.

## **2.9 The Research Purpose**

The purpose of this research is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation.

## **2.10 The General Research Question**

How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation?

## Chapter Three

### The Review of the Literature

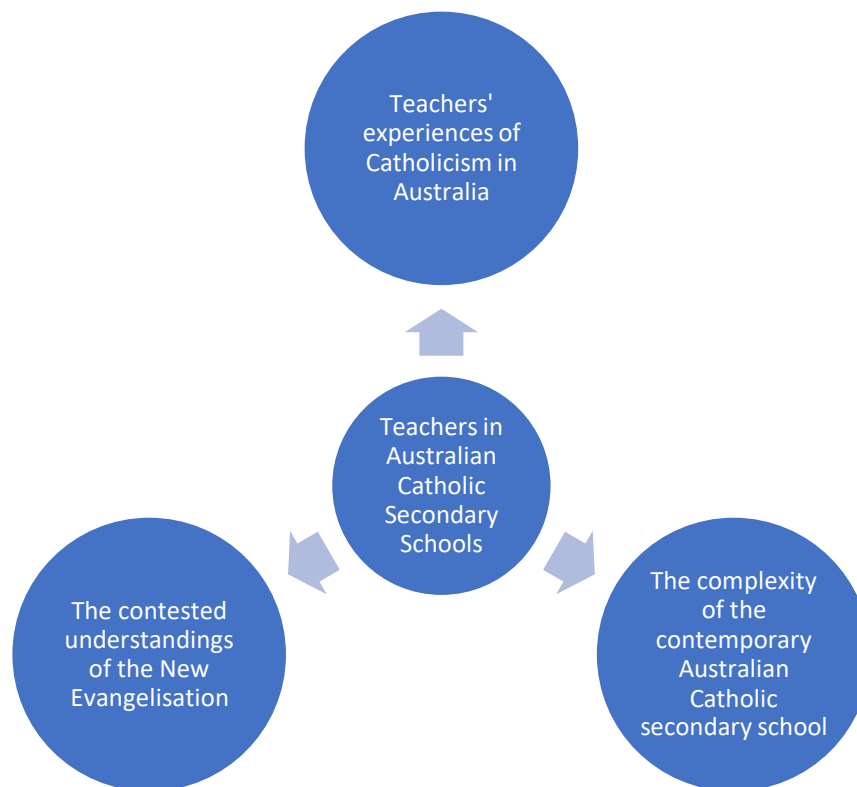
The purpose of this thesis is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation. The purpose of this chapter is to review the literature that underpins this research.

#### 3.1 Conceptual Framework

The scholarship that has been researched is synthesised into a conceptual framework. This structures the review of the literature as shown in Figure 3.1.

**Figure 3.1**

*Conceptual Framework*



There are three concepts which structure the literature review. These are:

1. Teachers' experiences of Catholicism in contemporary Australia
2. The contested understandings of the New Evangelisation
3. The complexities of the contemporary Australian Catholic secondary school

### 3.2 Teachers' Experiences of Catholicism in Contemporary Australia

Since the purpose of this thesis is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation, it is appropriate to review the research concerning Australian teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism. Three themes structure this concept:

1. Catholic secondary school teachers;
2. The relationship of Australian Catholic secondary school teachers with contemporary Catholicism;
3. The diversification of Australian religious belief and practice.

#### 3.2.1 Catholic secondary school teachers.

The first theme provides an overview of contemporary Australian Catholic secondary school teachers. During the time in which the research was conducted (2014-16), teachers in Catholic secondary schools comprised 53% of all teachers in Australian Catholic schools (NCEC, 2016a). Table 3.1 profiles teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools.

**Table 3.1**

*Teachers in Australian Secondary Catholic Schools in the period 2013–2014*

Characteristic	Statistic
Total secondary teachers	26,790
Secondary teacher gender ratio	59% Female: 41% Male
Teacher student ratio	12:1
Average age	44.5 years
Born in Australia	82.9 %
Average time in current school	9.3 years
Average hours worked at school/week	47.9 hours
Teaching experience less than 5 years	18.7 %
Teaching experience greater than 5 years	23.2%

*Note.* This table was developed from material drawn from *Education Future Report*, 2016, by M. McCrindle; *Staff in Australia's School 2013: Main Report on the Survey*, 2014, by P. McKenzie, P. R. Weldon, G. Rowley, M. Murphy, and J. McMillan; and *Australian Catholic Schools 2014*, 2016a, by the National Catholic Education Commission.

Several important observations are generated from an examination of the profile data. First, almost 27,000 teachers are employed in Catholic secondary schools. Since 1989, the number of teachers employed in Australian Catholic secondary schools has increased by one third (NCEC, 2016a). Second, there is more of a gender balance among teachers in Catholic secondary schools than in primary schools, where 83% of primary teachers are women (NCEC, 2016a). Third, most teachers in Catholic secondary schools in Australia are aged over 40 years. However, approximately 20% of teachers in Catholic secondary schools have less than five years' teaching experience. Overall, these teachers share a demographic profile similar to teachers in other Australian secondary educational sectors (McKenzie, Weldon, Rowley, Murphy, & McMillan, 2014).

As with all Australian teachers, Catholic secondary school teachers experience increasing expectations from a range of stakeholders (Gleeson, 2015; Gonski et al., 2018). The Australian National reform agenda identifies the “heavy and increasingly complex workloads” (Gonski et al., 2018, p. 69) of all Australian educators. In addition to their school-based obligations and curriculum delivery requirements, the expectation for teachers to ensure higher standards and outcomes for students in all Australian schools has been identified in the Australian national reform agenda (Council of Australian Governments [COAG], 2018; Gonski et al., 2018). Further, Australian teachers are obligated to meet the increasingly stringent Government and professional requirements of them for their continued registration and accreditation (Weldon, 2015). These expectations generate multiple, competing and increasing demands on teachers' time (Gowdie, 2017).

Along with a raft of professional expectations, teachers in Australian Catholic schools are also expected to honour ecclesial requirements of them to ensure the Catholicity of their schools (Congregation for Catholic Education [CCE], 1977, 1982, 1988, 2007; Pope Paul VI, 1965a). Not surprisingly, the Church insists that the Catholic school depends:

...almost entirely [on teachers] for the accomplishment of its goals and programs. They [teachers] should therefore be very carefully prepared so that both in secular and religious knowledge they are equipped with suitable qualifications and also with a pedagogical skill that is in keeping with the findings of the contemporary world. (Pope Paul VI, 1965a, 8)

While honouring these ecclesial expectations, teachers in all Catholic schools are also required to address the national, communal and professional expectations of all Australian educators (Franchi & Rymarz, 2017; Gleeson, O’Gorman, & O’Neill, 2018; Sultmann & Brown, 2016). In Australia:

[Catholic schools] are now challenged to maintain their overall [Catholic] character and ethos in a changing religious and social reality [and] must prove their validity as viable educational institutions, as well as satisfy the requirements of the Church, while simultaneously responding to government accountability and Church expectations. Their identity as Catholic schools is fundamental to their existence, and when they cease to be Catholic, for all purposes they cease to exist. (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009, p. 296)

Consequently, the ecclesial expectations of teachers in Australian Catholic schools require that they are involved in individual and systemic faith formation opportunities (Gowdie, 2011; NCEC, 2017; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016). This ongoing formation is an additional expectation for Catholic school teachers, and

...affirms the Christian vocation of educational leaders and teachers and their need for formation of the heart for it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose. It recognises that school staff “who truly live their faith will be agents of a new evangelisation in creating a positive climate for the Christian faith to grow and in spiritually nourishing the students entrusted to their care”. (NCEC, 2017, p. 6)

However, teachers in Australian Catholic schools do not exhibit a homogenous religious profile. Indeed, not all teachers employed in Catholic secondary schools are Catholics. In the Australian state in which the research is conducted, New South Wales, 27% of teachers in Catholic secondary schools are non-Catholic (Catholic Education Commission New South Wales, 2011). Further, teachers in Catholic secondary schools are predominantly lay. This phenomenon is relatively new. While teachers in the first Australian Catholic schools were lay (O’Farrell, 1992), the Catholic Bishops invited clergy and Religious brothers and sisters to staff Australian Catholic schools in order to address the challenges of the free, secular and compulsory education promoted by the various parliamentary acts of the 1870s (Sharkey, 2007). These were the conditions colonial Governments imposed upon schools in order for them to receive financial

support from Governments. However, by the 1960s, as a consequence of both increasing enrolments in Catholic schools and the decline in the number of teaching clergy and religious, lay teachers replaced clergy and religious as teachers (O'Donoghue, 2017; Singleton, 2014). With a developing ecclesial understanding and acceptance of the role of the laity following the Second Vatican Council from 1961–1965, lay educators have become responsible for the conduct of contemporary Australian Catholic education (McLaughlin, 2008; O'Donoghue, 2017). Consequently, these predominantly lay teachers, regardless of their religious affiliation, are expected to support Catholic beliefs and practices as well as participate in ongoing formation (Rymarz, 2011). The irony of this expectation is that many of these teachers have a tenuous relationship with Catholicism (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007; CCE, 1998).

### **3.2.2 The relationship of Australian Catholic secondary school teachers with contemporary Catholicism.**

The experience of religion in contemporary Australia is characterised by increasing religious disaffiliation and declining religious practice. These characteristics are also demonstrated by teachers in Catholic secondary schools (see Section 2.4). There are two possible explanations for the tenuous connection with Catholicism of teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools. These are the diminishing relevance of Australian Catholicism and the diminished credibility of the Australian Catholic Church

#### ***3.2.2.1 The diminishing relevance of Australian Catholicism.***

The first explanation for the tenuous connection with Catholicism had by teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools is the diminishing relevance of Catholicism for teachers. Sixty per cent of Australians identify with philosophies other than Christianity as their major religious influence (Mason, Singleton, & Webber, 2007). Moreover, the increasing trend towards religious disaffiliation and de-identification indicates that Christianity influences the lives of fewer Australians (Bouma, 2018). Consequently, Christian worldviews, which had previously informed the beliefs systems of most Australians, no longer do so (D'Orsa & D'Orsa, 2011). However, the Church and Catholic education authorities continue to reaffirm the faith-based purpose of Catholic schools:

The Catholic school, characterised mainly as an educating community, is a school for the person and of persons. In fact, it aims at forming the person in the integral



unity of [their] being, using the tools of teaching and learning where criteria of judgement, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life are formed. Above all, they are involved in the dynamics of interpersonal relations that form and vivify the school community....Because of its identity and its ecclesial roots, this community must aspire to becoming a Christian community, that is, a community of faith, able to create increasingly more profound relations of communion which are themselves educational. It is precisely the presence and life of an educational community, in which all the members participate in a fraternal communion, nourished by a living relationship with Christ and with the Church, that makes the Catholic school the environment for an authentically ecclesial experience. (CCE, 2007, 13–14)

However, the purported ecclesial identity of the Catholic school is at odds with the diminishing impact of Catholicism on the lives of many teachers in Catholic schools (Boeve, 2007; Byrne, 2005; Gleeson & Flaherty, 2016). There are several trends that illustrate the diminishing relevance of Catholicism for these teachers.

First, the faith-based purpose of the Catholic school is seemingly irrelevant to many teachers in Catholic secondary schools. Table 3.2 provides specific data concerning teachers' responses to characteristics typical of Catholic schools:

**Table 3.2***Perceptions of Teachers in Queensland Catholic Schools*

Indicator	Percentage
Teachers	
Primary	57.6%
Secondary	42.4%
Age	
Under 40 years of age	39.8%
Over 40 years of age	60.2%
Teaching experience	
Equal to or <10 years	50.3%
>10 years	49.7%
Role	
Principal	4.5%
Other position of responsibility	29%
Teacher	61.8%
Religion (top 4)	
Roman Catholic	81.2%
Other Christian	7.5%
Anglican	7.2%
No religion	3.3%
Religiosity	
Very important	35.4%
Important	38.4%
Somewhat important	22.2%
Unimportant	3.9%
Reason for teaching in Catholic schools (n=2287)	
Environment of Catholic schools	56.2%
Commitment to Catholic faith	27.0%
Job-related reasons	16.8%
Main purpose of Catholic schools (n=2287)	
Provide a safe and nurturing environment	26.5%
Provide an authentic experience of Catholic community	21.6%
Education in Catholic faith and tradition	19.5%
Develop active and informed citizens	18.2%

*Note.* N=2287. This table was developed with data drawn from *Identity and Curriculum in Catholic Education: Survey of Teachers' Opinions Regarding Certain Aspects of Catholic Education (Draft)* by J. Gleeson, 2017. Retrieved from [http://www.acu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/802378/draft\\_teacher\\_report.pdf](http://www.acu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/802378/draft_teacher_report.pdf)

Several observations are generated from an examination of these data. First, only 27% of respondents teach in Catholic schools because of their commitment to Catholicism. Fewer than half believe the purpose of Catholic schools is to provide quality education within the context of the Catholic faith as 44.7% believe a generic purpose such as the provision of a safe and nurturing environment to be the primary purpose of

Catholic schools (Gleeson, 2017). Indeed, Catholicism does not inform many teachers' reasons for teaching in Catholic school; rather, the development of a positive school climate, career-related incentives, and school location are more important motivations which attract these teachers to work in Catholic schools. These conclusions are consistent with earlier studies of teachers' understandings of the purpose of Catholic schools (Flynn, 1993). In addition, these conclusions parallel parents' perceptions of the purpose of Catholic schools (Sultmann, Thurgood, & Rasmussen, 2003). For many parents, academic achievement and personal development have a greater priority than the school's religious affiliation in school choice (Dowling, Beavis, Underwood, Sadeghi, & O'Malley, 2009).

Second, the integration of Catholic beliefs and perspectives into classroom practice is irrelevant to many teachers. This stance conflicts with the integration of Catholic perspectives into the curriculum as a priority for Catholic educational and ecclesial authorities (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007; CCE, 2014). The integration of these perspectives with the curriculum requires that teachers incorporate Catholic beliefs and teachings into curriculum planning and teaching (Gleeson & O'Neill, 2017). Teachers' opinions, identified from a sample of over 2200 respondents, regarding the integration of Catholic perspectives into the curriculum are illustrated in Table 3.3.

**Table 3.3**

*Survey of Teachers' Opinions Regarding Certain Aspects of Catholic Education, Queensland Catholic Schools*

Indicator	Percentage
Knowledge of key teachings of the Catholic Church	
Very Good	21.3%
Good	50.5%
Fair	24.3%
Poor	3.6%
Very Poorly	0.4%
Knowledge of Catholic social teaching	
Very Good	23.6%
Good	53.1%
Fair	20.4%
Poor	2.8%
Very Poorly	0.2%
Knowledge of Catholic moral teaching	
Very Good	26.7%
Good	55%
Fair	16.4%
Poor	1.9%
Very Poorly	0
Total Knowledge	
Very Good	23.9%
Good	52.8%
Fair	20.4%
Poor	2.8%
Very Poorly	0.2%
Integrate Catholic perspective' into curriculum	
Always	13%
Often	39.8%
Sometimes	38.6%
Rarely	7%
Never	1.7%
Teacher's confidence regarding integration of Catholic perspectives in pedagogy	
Strong	13.7%
Agree	54.5%
Unsure	26.6%
Disagree	7.2%
Strongly disagree	0.9%
Teacher's willingness to integrate Catholic perspectives in curriculum planning	
Strong	22.2%
Agree	56.7%
Unsure	16%
Disagree	3.6%
Strongly disagree	1.3%

*Note.* N=2253. This table was developed with data drawn from *Identity and Curriculum in Catholic Education: Survey of Teachers' Opinions Regarding Certain Aspects of*

*Catholic Education* (Draft) by J. Gleeson, 2017.

([http://www.acu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/802378/draft\\_teacher\\_report.pdf](http://www.acu.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0010/802378/draft_teacher_report.pdf)).

Several observations may be generated from this research. Seventy-five per cent of teachers believe they possess a good or very good understanding of Catholicism. Moreover, most teachers are willing to integrate this knowledge into their teaching. However, the data indicate that 20% of teachers regard their overall knowledge of Catholicism as fair to poor, with 47.3% integrating Catholic perspectives infrequently, rarely or not at all. Over 20% of teachers are unwilling to integrate Catholic perspectives into the curriculum or uncertain about whether they should be integrated. Thus, while the imperative to integrate Catholic values and beliefs into the curriculum is implicit in Catholic schools (D'Orsa, 2013), research suggests that many teachers in Catholic schools lack the knowledge, confidence, willingness or ability to integrate Catholicism into learning and teaching (Cloud, 2017; Gleeson & O'Neill, 2017; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016).

Finally, the tenuous connection with contemporary Catholicism of teachers in Catholic schools is compounded by the diminishing relevance of Catholicism to students. Many young Australians believe in the possibility of the existence of God but reject religious affiliation or practice (Mason, Webber, Singleton, & Hughes, 2006; Rymarz, 2012). As Table 3.4 suggests, institutional religion has diminished relevance to young Australians.

**Table 3.4***Australian Catholic Bishops' Youth (Aged 16–29) Survey*

Indicator	Percentage
Catholic and regularly attend Mass	25%
Catholic and occasionally go to Church	25%
Catholic family but do not practise	21%
Major life influence	
• Family	77%
• Friends	42%
• School teachers	20%
• Church or religious leaders	15%
Key issues for young people	
• Mental health	57.5%
• School or study	55.6%
• Drugs and alcohol	53.5%
• Body Image	51.2%
• Spirituality and religion	16.9%
Parish or Church community has some influence	
• Agree	44%

*Note.* N=15054. This table was developed with data drawn from *Called to Fullness of Life and Love: National Report on the Australian Catholic Bishops' Youth Survey 2017*, by T. Dantis and S. Reid, 2018 (<https://www.catholic.org.au/images/youthsurvey/300718/ACBC%20Youth%20Survey%20Report.pdf>).

The participants in this research included 8,214 students (81%) and 248 teachers in Catholic schools. Given that the participants were engaged in the research through Catholic agencies, it is reasonable to assume that participants had some affiliation with the Catholic Church (Dantis & Reid, 2018). Nevertheless, 75% do not worship regularly. Only 16.9% regard spirituality and religion as major influences on their lives, while just 15% indicate that the Catholic Church or religious leaders are important for them. These data indicate that institutional religion, and Catholicism more specifically, are irrelevant to many young Australians.

Further, research exploring 1200 Australian secondary students' experiences and understandings of religious, spiritual, gender and sexual diversity generated several categorisations of teenage spirituality, as shown in Table 3.5.

**Table 3.5**

*Australia's Gen Zs Project (13–18 Years old): Negotiating Religion, Sexuality and Diversity–Spirituality Types*

Spirituality types of Australian teens	Descriptor	% of population aged 13–18
This-worldly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no place in their worldview for religious, spiritual or non-material possibilities.</li> <li>• They never or rarely go to services of worship and don't identify with a religion.</li> <li>• They are technically atheistic.</li> <li>• Physical world is the only thing that exists.</li> <li>• Their thinking is entirely "this-worldly" or "science-y".</li> </ul>	23
Indifferent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are largely indifferent or undecided about religion, spirituality and atheism.</li> </ul>	15
Spiritual but not religious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God, faith and religion are not important to them, but the door is open to spiritual possibilities, including issues such as life after death, reincarnation, and belief in a higher being.</li> </ul>	18
Seekers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their worldview is decidedly eclectic.</li> <li>• They almost all self-describe as "spiritual". This finds expression in belief in life after death, and repeated experiences of a presence or power that is different from their everyday selves.</li> <li>• Seekers have a decidedly eclectic worldview, seeking out their spiritual truth. They most likely consult their horoscopes, have seen a psychic, or both.</li> <li>• At the same time, they identify with a religion and believe in God or a higher being.</li> </ul>	8
Nominally religious	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This group is largely culturally religious, following the religious identity of their parents, guardians or community (for example, a Catholic or Islamic school).</li> <li>• They identify with a religion, and believe in God, but faith is not important in their daily lives and they don't often enter a temple, church or mosque.</li> <li>• At the same time, they don't care for spiritual ideas either, such as reincarnation or horoscopes.</li> </ul>	20
Religiously committed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Religious faith—whether that is Christianity (mainly Pentecostal and evangelical), Islam or something else—is a big part of their lives.</li> <li>• The very large majority of this group attend services of worship regularly, report affective religious experiences, and believe there is life after death.</li> <li>• Almost all of them agree that religious faith is important in shaping how they live their lives.</li> </ul>	17

Note. N=1200. This table was developed with data drawn from “‘Whatever?’ Religion, Youth, and Identity in 21st Century Australia,” by A. Halafoff and L. Gobey, 2018, *Youth, Religion, and Identity in a Globalizing Context*, pp. 255–277 and “New Research Shows Australian Teens Have Complex Views on Religion and Spirituality,” by A. Singleton, 2018, *The Conversation* (<http://theconversation.com/new-research-shows-australian-teens-have-complex-views-on-religion-and-spirituality-103233>).

These categorisations provide several insights. Only 17% of respondent secondary students are religiously committed. While some 20% are nominally religious, many younger Australians (38%) are indifferent to or reject religion. Thus, the diminished relevance of Catholicism for teachers is compounded by the lack of relevance of religious belief reported by the students they teach. The impact of this phenomenon on teachers in Catholic secondary schools is exemplified in the experience of a teacher in 2017 Australian research:

[There is a] ...lack of understanding of Catholic teachings and the expression of these in the lives of teachers.... Many teachers, while identifying as Catholic, do not practise their faith in any real way. Of a staff of 50, less [*sic*] than 5 celebrate the sacrament of the Eucharist regularly and less [*sic*] than 10 at all. It is apparent that staff [members] do not give witness to their faith in any other practical way for example, through social justice or outreach programs... Some teachers working and teaching religion in Catholic schools are not Catholic and have a very limited understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church. A colleague recently admitted in a RE [Religious Education] planning session, [that] she was unaware of what was meant by the Holy Trinity or Pentecost.... This issue is one I have seen in three Catholic schools. Each of these have been in regional communities. [There are] ...high numbers of non-Catholic students in our schools.... [There is a]....Lack of support from both parents and many staff for Catholic traditions and practices....Unqualified teachers are not teaching correct Catholic doctrine....Kids are not really attuned to the attitudes and ethos we are trying to establish. (Gleeson, 2017, p. 40)

These data suggest the diminishing relevance of Catholicism to both teachers and students in Catholic schools and reflect the increasing percentage of Australians who are religiously disinterested or indifferent (Dunn & Piracha, 2015; Frame, 2009). Many



students in Australian Catholic schools are disengaged from religious belief and practice more broadly, and Catholic belief and practice specifically. Students' indifference to Catholicism compounds the experience of the irrelevancy of Catholicism for many teachers in Catholic secondary schools. Further, the relevancy of Catholicism for teachers in Catholic secondary schools has deteriorated due to the diminished credibility of the Catholic Church in Australia.

### ***3.2.2.2 The diminished credibility of the Australian Catholic Church.***

The second explanation for the tenuous relationship with contemporary Catholicism of teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools is the diminishing credibility of the Australian Catholic Church. A major reason for this phenomenon is the evidence offered to the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA) in 2017. The ARCIRCSA is the largest Royal Commission in Australia's history and comparable in its significance with other international investigations into child abuse within the Catholic Church (Wright, Swain, & McPhillips, 2017). The findings of the ARCIRCSA have been widely reported nationally and internationally (Cahill, 2019; Wright et al., 2017) indicating that:

...unlike any other religious denominations, [the Catholic Church] has been the subject of government investigations in the U.S., Canada, Ireland, Scotland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany. Church entities such as dioceses, religious institutes, colleges and schools have been the defendants in thousands of civil lawsuits in at least twenty different countries in North and South America, Europe and Oceania. The size and geographic distribution of the Church does not explain this phenomenon nor does the ethnic composition or socio-economic status of the countries where the Church is established. The reasons are found in the nature and structure of the Church itself. (Doyle, 2017)

ARCIRCSA reports that globally, between one in thirteen and one in fifteen diocesan priests and one in seventeen to one in twenty-three religious-order personnel are perpetrators of child sexual abuse (Cahill & Wilkinson, 2017). The argument developed is that several distinctive Catholic phenomena have contributed to this prevalence. These include the Church's governance structure, the propensity to protect the institution's reputation before reporting child abuse, the sexual dysfunction of perpetrators and the denial of justice to victims (Mathews, 2017; Timbs, 2016).

The Catholic Church has been the focus of the majority of Australian child sex abuse reports reported to the Royal Commission (Doyle, 2017). There are 4,444 claimants against the Catholic church from 1950–2010 (Cahill & Wilkinson, 2017). Of these claimants, 58.1% were abused by people in religious organisations. Of these, 61.4% were survivors of abuse in Catholic institutions (Mathews, 2018). Moreover, a significant proportion of incidences of child sexual abuse occurred in Catholic schools and many of the perpetrators were teaching priests or brothers (Cahill & Wilkinson, 2017). While there are few priests or religious currently teaching in Australian Catholic schools, there are nevertheless repercussions for teachers currently employed in these schools.

The emerging research on the impact of the ARCICSA on Australian Catholic schools and teachers in these Catholic schools indicates several trends. First, institutional child sexual abuse and the inadequacies of the responses of the Catholic Church to institutional child sexual abuse (Cahill & Wilkinson, 2017) has severe psychological, social, physical, educative, economic and spiritual impacts on survivors and their families (Middleton et al., 2014; Blakemore, Herbert, Arney, & Parkinson, 2017). Australian Catholic schools and their communities continue to respond to the impact of this abuse on survivors and their families (Cahill, 2019; Ormerod, 2019). Second, the reputation of Australian Catholic schools has been damaged by child sexual abuse that occurred in these schools which were mandated to educate, care and protect the young people in their care (McGillion & Grace, 2014; McPhillips, 2020). Third, the ARCICSA has described the cultural trauma associated with the revelations of the Royal Commission in Australia (Furness, 2015) describing

experiences of individual and collective despair, anger, resentment and loss of connection and confidence in the leadership of the Catholic Church amongst community members in response to revelations of ... abuse. The centrality of religious institutions to the fabric of the community, particularly historically, culturally or geographically, has been recognized as important to understanding the deep divisions and conflict experienced by community members following revelations of institutional abuse (Blakemore et al., 2017, p. 43).

Cultural trauma refers to “impact of serious and awful events, which affect community well-being, group identity, social cohesion, and group safety” (McPhillips, 2017, pp. 134–5). Arguably, this cultural trauma has resulted in a loss of trust and a sense of

betrayal not only among survivors and their families, but from among the broader Australian Catholic community and teachers in these schools (Blakemore et al., 2017). Finally, the ARCICSA has eight recommendations relating to Australian schools and teachers in these schools (Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2016). These recommendations have led to changes in teacher practice and increased expectations of all teaching in Australian schools. Some of these changes include the introduction of National Child Safe Standards, revised procedures for managing complaints and investigations, and increased requirements for teacher registration and accreditation (Middleton et al., 2014; Knott, 2018; McPhillips, 2020). The ARCICSA has also increased the expectations of teachers and school leaders to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children. These non-delegable responsibilities on teachers include mandatory reporting obligations and the implementation of wellbeing and pastoral care programs, not as complementary practices, but as an inclusive function of teacher roles. These changes also encompass recommendations to require teacher education courses to ensure that teachers are not only technically competent, but also ethically prepared for their roles in schools in light of the findings of the ARCICSA (Whelen, 2019).

Moreover, the prevalence of child sexual abuse within Christian institutions and the inadequate responses of the Church have impacted negatively upon the credibility of Christianity, and Catholicism more specifically. Table 3.6 illustrates that child sexual abuse within the Christian churches is a primary reason for Australians' negative opinions of Christians and Christianity (McCrindle, 2017). Moreover, the data indicate a decline in attitude by Australians to the overall place of religion within the social fabric of society.

**Table 3.6***Major Negative Influence on Australians Perceptions of Christians and Christianity*

Influence	Major influence	Significant influence	Slight influence	No influence
Church abuse: From priests abusing children to church leaders involved in scandals	56	17	17	10
Religious wars: How could adherence to a true religion cause such violence, from the crusades of old to religious clashes today	44	20	22	14
Hypocrisy: Christians not practising what they preach	41	24	23	12
Judgement of others: Christians acting self-righteously and pointing out the faults in others and in society	38	25	23	13
Issues around money: Asking for money and misuse of money	37	25	24	15
Authoritarian style: The church seems to apply a lot of rules and regulations	33	27	24	16
Outdatedness: The church in its beliefs and practices is not aligned with the world today	32	23	27	17
Exclusivity: The church seems to act separately from society and in a superior manner	32	26	27	16

*Note.* N=1024. This table was developed with data from *Faith and Belief in Australia: A National Study of Religion, Spirituality and Worldview Trends* by M. McCrindle, 2017.

(<https://mccrindle.com.au/insights/publications/reports-and-summaries/>.)

Ninety per cent of respondents indicate that child abuse within Christian organisations is an influence on their negative perception of Christianity. Furthermore, even prior to the ARCIRCSA, Australian Catholics identified child sexual abuse within

the Catholic Church as the primary reason for discontinuing Sunday Mass attendance (Dixon et al., 2007). Table 3.7 indicates that since the ARCIRCSA, many practising Catholics' attitude to and confidence in the institutional Catholic church have been undermined.

**Table 3.7**

*Responses of Mass Attenders in Australian Catholic Parishes to Child Sexual Abuse Within the Catholic Church*

Descriptor	% Strongly agree	% Agree	% Neutral	% Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
The Church's response to child sexual abuse has been inadequate	22	32	27	15	4
The crisis regarding child sexual abuse has damaged my confidence in the Catholic Church	21	28	20	21	10

*Note.* N=2530. Data for this table was drawn from *NCLS Survey 2011*, by R. Powell, M. Pepper, and N. Hancock, 2016. (<http://www.ncls.org.au/research/2011-national-church-life-survey>).

Clearly then, the Catholic Church's credibility has suffered substantially because of the significant child sexual abuse perpetrated over decades by religious personnel. This has been compounded by the Church's inappropriate response focussing on preserving the reputation of the Church and not pursuing justice for victims. To date, the Australian Catholic Church's response has consisted of apologies and compensation, as well as the provision of support to victims and survivors. In addition, the Church has been compelled to cooperate actively with investigations, as well as ensure that it genuinely adopts best practice in professional standards (Novello, 2015). However, the impact of institutional child sexual abuse within the Australian Catholic Church and the inadequate institutional responses have attracted universal criticism (Doyle, 2017). Not surprisingly, the Church's response has undermined its moral capital as well as its credibility (Timbs, 2016).

### **3.2.3 The diversification of Australian religious belief and practice.**

The third theme informing teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism is the diversification of Australian religious belief and practice. Religion in contemporary Australia is characterised by increasing disaffiliation, declining institutional practice and especially, in the case of the Catholic Church, diminished credibility. However, the review of the literature also indicates a concurrent diversification of religious belief and practice among Australians. The emergence of these diverse forms of religious expression indicates that Catholicism is experiencing a major, but not unique, cyclic change (Casanova, 2018). Historically, this type of change is characterised by a period of diversification and crisis in belief and practice leading to Church reform, suggestive of a change in the nature of religious expression (Tickle, 2008). Four trends illuminate this theme.

First, Australia is more religiously diverse in 2019 than at any time in its history. Migration has been critical to the diversity of both religious belief and practice and religious diversity is an important, if not defining characteristic, of Australia's pluralistic and multicultural society (Bouma, 2011; Lynch, 2016). Indeed, at the first national census in 1911, 96% of eligible Australians identified themselves as Christian (see Section 2.3). In contrast, the 2016 Census reported that 53% of Australians identify as Christian, 2.6% as Islamic and 2.4% as Buddhist with some 30% indicating no religious affiliation (ABS, 2017b).

Second, Australians are increasingly embracing alternative, non-Christian and non-institutional forms of religious belief and practice, indicating a rejection of mainstream religious affiliation (Tacey, 2003). In the decade to 2016, Australians choosing a religion other than Christianity increased from 5.6% to 8.2% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017a). Those with no religious affiliation increased from 19% to over 30% (ABS, 2017a). For those in the 18–34 age range, 39% reported no religious affiliation, while 12% followed a religion other than Christianity (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017b). This trend is illustrated in Table 3.8:

**Table 3.8***Faith and Belief in Australia*

Indicator	Descriptor	%
Religious affiliation	Non-religious	32%
	Catholic/Orthodox	25%
	Other Christian	19%
	Spiritual but not religious	14%
	Non-Christian	55%
	Commitment to spirituality or religion of their upbringing	47%
Attitude to Christianity	Warm to Christianity	24%
	Believe but do not practise	15%
	Opposed to Christianity	25%
Religious Practice	None	57%
	Rarely	23%
	Significant	11%
	Extremely involved	10%
Practice of Christians	Regular (weekly, fortnightly, monthly)	15%
	Never (less than annual or never)	22%
Discussing spirituality or religion	Often or occasionally	55%
Places to explore spirituality and religion	Inappropriate	
	• Shopping centres	23%
	• Community events	12%
Attitude to Christianity	Major deterrents to Christianity	
	• Attitude to homosexuality	31%
	• Theory of hell	28%
	• Perceptions of child abuse	73%
	• Hypocrisy	65%
	• Religious wars	65%
Knowledge of Christianity	Do not know any Christians	8%
	Know two or more Christians	79%
Descriptor of Christians	Caring	41%
	Loving	35%
	Kind	35%
Knowledge of Christian Church	Know a great deal	22%
	Moderate knowledge	60%
	Nothing at all	18%
Value of Christian Church and their work	Highly value the work of the Church	
	• Homeless	74%
	• Offering financial assistance	72%
Attitude to Jesus	Jesus' life is very important to the history/culture of the world	53%
	Jesus' life is very important to me personally	31%
	Attractive attributes of Jesus	
	• Love	50%
	• Hope	39%
	• Care	34%

Note. N=1024. This table was developed from data drawn from *Faith and Belief in Australia: A National Study of Religion, Spirituality and Worldview Trends* by M. McCrindle, 2017. (<https://mccrindle.com.au/insights/publications/reports-and-summaries/>.)

The data indicate that many Australians have limited engagement with Christianity. Nevertheless, while most respondents value the contributions of Christian churches, they believe Christian teaching lacks credibility. Further, 46% of respondents indicate that while they are spiritual, they are so without resorting to religion. Indeed, 25% are opposed to Christianity. Consequently,

...[The] divorce of spirituality from religion is revealed in how the spiritual has come to be associated in the popular imagination with the largely individual quest for—and expression of—transcendent experiences and meaning, while the religious has become narrowly defined in terms of more formal institutional structures, rituals, and theological dogma. (Kenneson, 2015, p. 5)

This form of spiritual expression incorporates a range of individual religious beliefs and practices which are not associated with traditional religion (Polack & Pickel, 2008). Private religious reflection and practice take precedence over public ritual because religion is perceived as stifling and the antithesis of an authentic spirituality (Fuller, 2001; Kenneson, 2015). This phenomenon is particularly evident among younger Australians. Seventy-two per cent of Australians aged 15–29 years have disassociated themselves from Christian churches (Hughes, 2015). While ambivalent about the existence of God, they embrace a spirituality that is characterised by appropriate, meaningful prayer and an openness to a variety of spiritual expressions (Elshof, 2019; Mata-McMahon, 2016). The reasons for this phenomenon are varied. However, primary among these is the lack of religious socialisation within the family and a decline in affiliation with culturally based religious traditions (O'Murchu, 2010; Rymarz & Graham, 2006). Indeed, 53% of Australians reject the spirituality or religion of their upbringing (Table 3.8). Consequently,

religious non-affiliation is characterised by indifference [towards a personal religious involvement] and openness [towards knowledge of religions and religious phenomena]. Religiously unaffiliated pupils are considered individualised people who construct their personally chosen views and attitudes,



not obstructed by any religious affiliation. Religious blankness seems to be their starting point. (Elshof, 2019, p. 263)

The third indicator of the diversification of religious belief among Australians is their selective religious beliefs, practices and institutional adherence. This loose affiliation is characterised as belief without belonging and does not imply the rejection of mainstream religious practice (Davie, 1994, 2007). In this instance, “unaffiliated pupils ventilate respect for the role religion might play in people’s personal lives” (Elshof, 2019, p. 265). Rejecting the notion of “religious blankness” some religiously unaffiliated pupils characteristically

...consider the Catholic ritual and sacramental repertoire and the value orientation to be of potential importance for their personal and social life. Their positive evaluation of Catholic rituals and values strengthens the assumption that their views and attitudes are affected by Catholic roots. These aspects enable them to experience themselves as a self-evident part of an inclusive, meaningful collective. (Elshof, 2019, p. 265)

Indeed, while remaining as implicit members of specific denominations such as Catholicism, they choose “rightful access when it comes to times to celebrate the transcendent rites of passage, birth and death” (Casanova, 2006, p. 16).

Catholic identity was previously nurtured by a family’s relationship with a local Catholic community in which the parish contributed an important influence (Gascoigne, 2018; Ó Murchú, 2015). The Catholic parish offered multiple social activities and networks (Feuerherd, 2018). Consequently, the local parish became a hub of social life for Catholic families (Bouma, 2006). This dynamic generated a unique Australian Catholic culture. However, in the twenty-first century, many Catholics, like their fellow Australians, engage energetically with a primarily secular society (Lynch, 2016). Their religious practices are selective, reflecting their loose affiliation with mainstream churches (Herzog, 2017; Kenneson, 2015). These trends are reflected in the data which indicate that the percentage of the Australian Catholic population that attends Mass regularly has declined from 12.2% in 2011 to 11.8% in 2019 (PRO, 2019). The disconnection of Australian Catholics from Catholic parishes illustrates the disinterest many contemporary Catholics have in institutionalised expressions of religion (Ebejer, 2018). Unsurprisingly, Australian Catholics propose new models of Catholic parishes

including parishes that combine parishes and schools in “new ecclesial communities” (Dantis, Bowell, Reid, & Dudfield, 2019, pp. 93–94).

Finally, varied self-understandings exist among Australians who identify as Catholic (Arbuckle, 2013). This phenomenon is illustrated in Table 3.9.

**Table 3.9**

*Catholic Identities: Sociological Types*

Type	Descriptor
Traditional Catholics	Attend Mass weekly Adhere to teachings of the pope and bishops
Vatican II Catholics	Attend Mass weekly Are committed to the theology of Vatican II Are educated Are prepared to challenge the Church
Fundamentalist Catholics	Are committed to the Church Identify as either “Right” or “Left” fundamentalists Adhere to fundamental interpretation of Vatican II
Selective Catholics	Attend Mass weekly Reject some beliefs and practices Practise birth control Commit strongly to social justice
Independent Catholics	Attend Mass irregularly Ignore teachings that fail to make sense Consider themselves still Catholic
Minimalist Catholics	Attend Mass at major Christian feasts and celebrations of rites of passage Claim to be Catholic but largely unaware of the teachings and activities of the Church
Utilitarian Catholics	Commit to Mass in minimalist way Choose only those beliefs and practices that have congruence with mainstream values Make use of Catholic institutions such as Catholic schools
Disengaged Catholics	Identify themselves as Catholics by Baptism alone Reject relevance of the Church to them May make use of Catholic school for children Distrust ecclesial leadership
New Migratory Catholics	Attend Mass according to their migrant customs Are strongly devotional Use the local parish for support
Postmodern Catholics	May attend Mass but construct a religious identity from a multitude of religious sources Distrust moral judgments of Church Have little knowledge of Catholic belief and practice Have little interest in critiquing the Church or its structures
Lamentative Catholics	Are faithful to Mass and Vatican II theology Have strong spiritual interest Feel abandoned and betrayed by the Church’s refusal of institutional change according to Vatican II Yearn for a deep renewal of the Church

*Note.* Adapted from *Catholic Identity or Identities?: Refounding Ministries in Chaotic Times*, by G. Arbuckle, 2013.

The categorisation of these eleven sociological types of contemporary Catholics invites explanation as the classifications reflect the dynamic nature of contemporary Catholicism. The diversity among Catholics is demonstrated in religious practice, adherence to Church teachings, and affiliation with Catholic parishes and schools. The descriptors also illustrate the challenging effect the Second Vatican Council (1961–1965) and the Church’s teachings on morality have had on many Catholics. Consequently, more than 20,000 Australians annually are ceasing to identify themselves as Catholics (Dixon & Reid, 2013b). Further, many active Catholics now worship more sporadically than in previous generations (O’Loughlin, 2012). These are colloquially labelled as “Cafeteria Catholics” (Wexler, 2016). While they are involved in charitable Church activities, they rarely worship (DeThomasis, 2012). Table 3.4 reports this phenomenon.

The participants in this research included 8000 students and 248 teachers in Catholic schools. The research concludes that many of these Australian Catholics have a loose affiliation with the Church (Dixon, 2017). In contrast, they have positive experiences with the Catholic school, selective religious festivals and charitable activities (Dantis & Reid, 2018). One particular example of these positive experiences is how specific Catholic schools cultivate the charism of a particular founder in promoting relevant religious expression (Elvery, 2013; Finn, 2013; Lee, 2015). A charism is a gift, “given by the Holy Spirit, to a person or a group for a particular work in the world” (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2002, No. 799). The spiritualities derived from these charisms offer members of school communities practices and a communal association that enhance their spiritual identity (Cook & Simonds, 2011; Green, 2018).

These four trends illustrate how religious belief and practice in Australia are not simply declining. Moreover, with increasing pluralism, the personalisation of religious belief and practice is increasing.

### **3.2.3.1 Specific research question one.**

The review of the literature indicates that many influences contribute to the dynamic nature of Australian Catholic affiliation and practice. The diminished relevance of Catholicism, the declining credibility of the Catholic Church and the emergence of diverse forms of religious expression characterise the experience of Roman Catholicism

for Australian teachers. Further, the experience of contemporary Catholicism that teachers in Catholic secondary schools have is relatively under-researched (Grace, 2002; O'Donoghue, 2017). This phenomenon generates the rationale for the first specific research question:

How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience contemporary Catholicism?

### **3.3 The Contested Understandings of the New Evangelisation**

The second concept to structure the review of the literature is the contested understandings of the New Evangelisation. Several interrelated themes emerge from the review of the literature to construct this concept. These are:

1. The origins of the New Evangelisation
2. The New Evangelisation and mission
3. The contested understandings of the New Evangelisation
4. Research on the understanding of the New Evangelisation

#### **3.3.1 The origins of the New Evangelisation.**

The concept of evangelisation has a twofold origin. These are the scriptural and ecclesial origins of the concept.

##### ***3.3.1.1. The scriptural origins of the concept of the New Evangelisation.***

The word, evangelisation, originates from the teachings of Jesus as documented in the four Gospels. The authors of the Gospels, the evangelists, assert that the mission of Jesus is to evangelise or proclaim the Gospel or the Good News (Dees, 2016). The term Good News is translated from the Greek term, *evangelion*, and the Latin term, *evangelium* (Gowdie, 2017). Thus, the Gospels adopt the verb, evangelise, to describe the initial proclamation of the Good News by Jesus and his first followers (Grogan & Kim, 2015). The Gospels recount the Risen Jesus commissioning his disciples to evangelise all people (Matthew 28:19; Luke 24, New Revised Standard Version). Consequently, Jesus' followers in turn evangelised through the witness of their lives and through teaching, preaching and healing (Matthew 28:19; Luke 24: 34-49). Thus, they realised the Great Commission of Jesus:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given

to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age”. (Matthew 28:16–20)

Several models of evangelisation are identified in the New Testament (Dumais, 2014). They illustrate four different, yet interrelated, understandings of the concept of evangelisation, as shown in Table 3.10.

**Table 3.10**

*Models of Evangelisation Derived From Scripture*

Model	Descriptor	Scriptural Reference
The kerygmatic model	Evangelisation as the <b>proclamation</b> ( <i>kerygma</i> ) of Jesus Christ and the Gospel	Acts 1–13
The Athens model	Evangelisation in <b>witness</b> ( <i>marturia</i> ) and <b>teaching</b> ( <i>Didache</i> )	Acts 14, 17
The evangelical model of humanism	Evangelisation as <b>encountering</b> the exceptional human qualities of Jesus and the witness and <b>service</b> ( <i>diakonia</i> ) of Jesus’ disciples	Luke 6, 7, 10 Matthew 5
The Emmaus model	Evangelisation as the gradual encountering of the Risen Jesus leading to <b>worship</b> ( <i>leitourgia</i> ), <b>community</b> ( <i>koinonia</i> ) and <b>conversion</b>	Luke 24

*Note.* Material for this table was drawn from *Deus Caritas Est: Encyclical Letter of the Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, men and Women Religious and all the lay Faithful on Christian Love*, by Pope Benedict XVI, 2006, and *After Emmaus: Biblical Models for the New Evangelization*, by M. Dumais, 2014.

These models of evangelisation invite explanation. The kerygmatic model (Dulles, 2002; Dumais, 2014; Mellor, 2016) emphasises evangelisation as the initial proclamation of the Good News by Jesus and the Apostles’ subsequent assertion that Jesus is the Son of God. This model of evangelisation asserts that evangelisation is the reception of the Gospel’s Good News which leads to conversion and commitment to Catholicism.

In contrast, the Athens model of evangelisation (Dumais, 2014) emphasises evangelisation as the authentic relationships with committed Christians which leads to conversion. The early followers of Jesus, having been evangelised, become evangelisers. Consequently, they evangelised through witness and teaching. Their teaching

acknowledged the cultural context of those to be evangelised. Thus, the proclamation of the Good News was more “desirable” because this mode of evangelisation sought to integrate people’s culture with Christian belief (Dumais, 2014, p. 56). This cultural sensitivity and engagement was confirmed by the Second Vatican Council as a preferable orientation of Catholic service, and by implication, evangelisation:

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. For theirs is a community composed of men. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the Kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for every man. That is why this community realises that it is truly linked with mankind and its history by the deepest of bonds. (Pope Paul VI, 1965c, Preface, No. 1)

The approach was confirmed by Pope John Paul II in his call for a New Evangelisation:

Our times are both momentous and fascinating. While on the one hand people seem to be pursuing material prosperity and to be sinking ever deeper into consumerism and materialism, on the other hand we are witnessing a desperate search for meaning, the need for an inner life, and a desire to learn new forms and methods of meditation and prayer. Not only in cultures with strong religious elements, but also in secularised societies, the spiritual dimension of life is being sought after as an antidote to dehumanisation. This phenomenon—the so-called ‘religious revival’—is not without ambiguity, but it also represents an opportunity. The Church has an immense spiritual patrimony to offer humankind ... it is the Christian path to meeting God, to prayer, to asceticism, and to the search for life’s meaning. Here too there is an ‘Areopagus’ to be evangelised. (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 38)

The third scriptural model is the evangelical model of humanism. It has a twofold emphasis. First, Jesus is portrayed as the embodiment of the compassion and forgiveness of God (Dumais, 2014). Consequently, all are invited to follow Jesus. The Good News is attractive because it offers a means of becoming fully human (Bevans, 2018). Second, this humanistic approach to evangelisation explains how authentic living leads to

happiness (Matthew 5). It recognises that all people are made in the image of God. Consequently, it is in community and through service of people that evangelisation occurs and Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God is realised (McGregor, 2012). This model is explained by Pope Benedict XVI when he writes "Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction (Pope Benedict XVI, 2006, No. 1, para. 2).

Finally, the Emmaus model of evangelisation presents the understanding that evangelisation is the gradual encounter with the person of Jesus through the Christian community which leads to conversion. This model implies that the evangeliser journeys with those to be evangelised and through this encounter others are evangelised. As such, the key dynamic is not worship but hospitality:

Evangelisation is a process that starts with a witness of life and word that leads to an announcing of the gospel and which invites the person evangelised to conversion and sacramental life. The end result is that one evangeliser himself/herself becomes an evangeliser of others. (Grogan & Kim, 2015, p. 137)

These scriptural foundations illustrate the scriptural basis upon which the Catholic Church understands the New Evangelisation.

### ***3.3.1.2 The ecclesial origins of the concept of the New Evangelisation.***

The concept of the *New Evangelisation* has its ecclesial origins in the historical, sociological and theological challenges of the twentieth century which the Church attempted to address in the teachings of the Second Vatican Council from 1962–1965 (see Section 2.6). Until this time, the concept of evangelisation was largely associated with the mission activity of the Protestant churches (Grogan & Kim, 2015). However, when the Second Vatican Council examined the relationship between the Catholic Church and contemporary society (Dumais, 2014), an ecclesial understanding of the mission of the Church and evangelisation was rediscovered:

... the task of evangelising all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church'. It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent. Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 14)

Evangelisation, and subsequently, the concept of the New Evangelisation, has become the focus of a considerable quantum of ecclesial literature (Mellor, 2016). Table 3.11 illustrates the complexity of this body of literature.

**Table 3.11**

*The New Evangelisation and Major Post-Conciliar Church Documents*

Year	Church document	Relevance to the development of the concept New Evangelisation
1965	<i>Ad Gentes</i>	Explains that the pilgrim Church is missionary by its very nature
1975	<i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i>	Presents the Catholic Church's comprehensive vision for contemporary evangelisation
1988	<i>Christifideles Laici</i>	Describes the role of lay members of the Catholic Church
1990	<i>Redemptoris Missio</i>	Outlines three circumstances of evangelisation and provides the impetus for the further articulation of the New Evangelisation
1997	<i>The General Directory for Catechesis</i>	Describes the place of catechesis in evangelisation
2001	<i>Novo Millennio Inuente</i>	References the New Evangelisation at the close of the Jubilee year
2005	<i>Deus Caritas Est</i>	Presents an understanding of evangelisation based on the ecclesial dimensions of worship, witness, proclamation, service, teaching and community
2008	<i>Aparecida</i>	Presents a call to action, including new evangelisation, for the Church in Latin America
2010	<i>Ubicumque et Semper</i>	Presents the establishment of the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelisation
2011	<i>Lineamenta</i>	Presents the preparatory document for the Synod on the New Evangelisation
2012	<i>Porta Fidei</i>	Presents the Papal letter inaugurating the Year of Faith referencing the New Evangelisation
2012	<i>Instrumentum Laboris</i>	Presents the working document for the Synod on the New Evangelisation
2012	<i>Final Propositions</i>	Lists the 58 final propositions for the Synod on the New Evangelisation
2013	<i>Lumen Fidei</i>	Presents the first encyclical of Pope Francis on faith in the context of the evangelising mission of the Church
2013	<i>Evangelii Gaudium</i>	Presents the Apostolic exhortation on the New Evangelisation



*Note.* Data in this table was drawn from *Stirring the Soul of Catholic Education: Formation for Mission*, by J. D. Gowdie, 2017, and *Timeline: The New Evangelisation and Major Church Documents*, by La Salle Academy for Faith Formation and Religious Education, 2017.

Several observations may be generated from an analysis of this overview. First, the Catholic Church's understanding of the New Evangelisation has been the subject of considerable ecclesial consideration. Not surprisingly, the concept of the New Evangelisation is multifaceted, interrelated and contested (Mellor, 2016; Sultmann & Brown, 2014) such that:

...any partial and fragmentary definition which attempts to render the reality of Evangelisation in all its richness, complexity and dynamism does so only at the risk of impoverishing it and even of distorting it. It is impossible to grasp the concept of Evangelisation unless one tries to keep in view all its essential elements. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 17)

Second, the concept of the New Evangelisation has evolved in response to contextual realities. For almost two millennia, the Catholic Church utilised the human and material resources of Catholic Europe to lead its evangelising initiatives. With the secularisation of Europe, the Church has been compelled to reconsider the nature of its contemporary mission (Mellor, 2016). Not surprisingly, a new understanding of evangelisation has evolved.

Evangelisation has remained a constant of theology since the Second Vatican Council...[as] an evangelising response to a particular cultural circumstance. In a papal sense, what Paul VI foresaw, John Paul II initiated, Benedict XVI institutionalised and Francis embodied. (Mellor, 2016, p. 97)

### **3.3.2 The New Evangelisation and mission.**

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, mission was understood as an activity of the Church. In contrast, since the Second Vatican Council mission became the paramount concept underpinning an understanding of evangelisation (Bevans, 2013). "Mission comes first. The church does not have a mission. The mission, rather, has a church" (Bevans, 2009). The development of the Church's concept of mission is illustrated in Table 3.12.

**Table 3.12***An Overview of the Development of the Church's Concept of Mission*

Pre-Vatican II understanding	Post-Vatican II understanding
The church's work for the salvation of souls	For the reign or kingdom of God
For non-Christians in foreign places	Encompassing all of humanity
The responsibility of missionaries, primarily from Europe	The responsibility of all the baptised
The Christianisation of cultures and the conversion of non-Christians	To encounter and dialogue with all cultures and peoples

*Note.* Adapted from *Stirring the Soul of Catholic Education: Formation for Mission*, by J. D. Gowdie, 2017.

Subsequently, the Church has come to understand mission as “what God does, through the church and in the world” (Gowdie, 2017, p. 121). Thus, the realisation of Jesus’ vision for the Kingdom of God in the world is the goal of God’s mission (Amaladoss, 1997; Pope Paul VI, 1965b, Nos 10–18). Clearly then, the mission of God has a Church (Bevans & Tahaafe-Williams, 2012).

The concept of the New Evangelisation is derived from the Church’s renewed understanding of mission. The Catholic Church asserts that “the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity” and the very reason for the Church’s existence is to evangelise (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 15). The Holy Spirit is the “principal agent of the new evangelisation” and mission is the paradigm for the entire activity of the Church (Pope John Paul II, 1994, No. 45; Tynan, 2013). All the activity of the Church constitutes evangelisation which is the “totality of those activities by which people are brought to participate in the mystery of Christ” (Caprile, 1975, p. 920). Evangelisation is therefore the integration of the various activities of the Church in the service of God’s mission (Amaladoss, 1997). Consequently, evangelisation is understood as “the responsibility of all the members of the People of God” (Pope John Paul II, 2001b, No. 21). Because mission is no longer confined to geographical locations and because the mission is no longer the responsibility of professional missionaries, new responses have been generated (Connolly, 2015):

The fact that there is a diversity of activities *in the Church's one mission*, is not intrinsic to that mission, but arises from the variety of circumstances in which that

mission is carried out. Looking at today's world from the viewpoint of Evangelisation, we can distinguish *three situations*. First, there is the situation which the Church's missionary activity addresses: peoples, groups, and socio-cultural contexts in which Christ and his Gospel are not known, or which lack Christian communities sufficiently mature to be able to incarnate the faith in their own environment and proclaim it to other groups. This is mission *ad gentes* in the proper sense of the term. Secondly, there are Christian communities with adequate and solid ecclesial structures. They are fervent in their faith and in Christian living. They bear witness to the Gospel in their surroundings and have a sense of commitment to the universal mission. In these communities the Church carries out her activity and pastoral care. Thirdly, there is an intermediate situation, particularly in countries with ancient Christian roots, and occasionally in the younger Churches as well, where entire groups of the baptised have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a “new Evangelisation” or a “re-Evangelisation”. (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33)

Thus, Pope John Paul II specified the need for a “New Evangelisation” arising from a renewed understanding of mission (Bevans, 2014a). He articulated a vision for evangelisation which not only maintained the Church’s commitment to traditional mission work, but also encouraged a new evangelisation of those people who Pope John Paul II describes as having lost a living sense of faith.

Moreover, Pope Francis has confirmed the centrality of mission to the identity of the Catholic Church. During his papacy, mission and evangelisation have become interchangeable concepts (Connolly, 2015). For Pope Francis, the Church is constantly in a state of mission (Bevans, 2013; Connolly, 2015) and the baptised are missionary disciples enacting God’s mission in the world (Pope Francis, 2013; Mallon, 2014):

I dream of a “missionary option”, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the Evangelisation of today’s world rather than for the Church’s own self-preservation. (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 27)

Thus, the goal of evangelisation is the realisation of Jesus' vision of the Kingdom.  
The relationship between the New Evangelisation and Mission

can be understood and practised only if we move, as Vatican II did, from looking on evangelisation as Church-extension to contemplating it as God's own mission in the world, with which we are called to collaborate, in particular as disciples of Jesus. The Church's mission has its origin in the mission of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. In accordance with his plan for the whole universe, God 'generously pours out, and never ceases to pour out, his divine goodness, so that he who is creator of all things might at last become all in all' (1 Cor 15:28). Salvation is not just individual, but social and cosmic and embraces all dimensions of the human (cf. Rom 8). The mission of the Son and of the Spirit and the mission of the Church are in furtherance and at the service of this mission. God's own mission is ongoing everywhere and at all times and embraces all aspects of reality, transforming them and leading them to the fullness that has been destined for them. (cf. Eph 1:10; Amaladoss, 1997, p. 5)

### **3.3.3 The contested understandings of the New Evangelisation.**

These contested understandings of the New Evangelisation are informed by two differing models of Church—those of *citadel* and *web*:

The “citadel” approach, where the church is protected and extended in the process of evangelisation, has its energy invested in maintenance and measurement, and quite specific outcomes. The “web” approach, where the church sees itself as part of, rather than owning or being the origin of God’s mission, has its energy invested in recognising and contributing to the wider reign of God in the world, with outcomes far more difficult to measure. (Grace, 1997 cited in Gowdie, 2011, p. 115)

These two models of Church inform the contested understandings of the New Evangelisation illustrated in Figure 3.2.

**Figure 3.2**

*The Contested Understandings of the New Evangelisation*



### **3.3.3.1 Conversion.**

The New Evangelisation may be understood as conversion. The Catholic Church understands conversion to be the radical reorientation of one’s life toward God through embracing the kerygma, the proclamation of salvation in Jesus Christ (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2002, Nos 1427, 1431, 1423). This encounter with Christ leads to the transformation of individuals and communities (Clifford, 2015):

In the complex reality of mission, initial proclamation has a central and irreplaceable role, since it introduces man [*sic*] “into the mystery of the love of God, who invites him [*sic*] to enter into a personal relationship with himself [*sic*] in Christ” and opens the way to conversion. (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 44)

This interpretation of the New Evangelisation contends that individuals and cultures are continually in need of conversion (Ross, 2013). As such, the aim of the New Evangelisation is to convert those Christians who have lost a living sense of faith and encourage them to return to regular worship (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33). Conversion also applies to the ongoing conversion of the Church through “a rediscovery and deepening of [its] missionary nature and identity” (Clifford, 2015, p. 55):

I dream of a “missionary option”, that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the Evangelisation of today’s world rather than for the Church’s own self-preservation. (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 27)

Conversion is premised on the understanding that evangelisation is always new. Its vitality requires new and creative approaches to the proclamation of the Gospel message as “...the old foundations will no longer do...one must not patch an old cloak with new cloth or put new wine in old wineskins” (Lonergan, 1974, p. 63). Indeed, this conclusion is confirmed in research exploring the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic schools. The study:

evaluated textbooks and curricula used by NSW and ACT Catholic High Schools as to the presence of teaching about this encounter with Jesus Christ and facilitating this encounter among NSW and ACT Catholic High School students. There was relatively little teaching about the reality of this encounter with Jesus Christ and radical conversion to Him in the text books and curricula of the various diocese [*sic*] and archdiocese in NSW. There was almost no material at all giving suggestions as to how this encounter with Jesus Christ could be facilitated. (Tynan, 2013, p. 180)

Consequently conversion, as the purpose of the New Evangelisation, has limited application to Catholic schools as centres of the New Evangelisation (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007; Tynan, 2013). Moreover, this interpretation of the New Evangelisation has been criticised as indoctrination because it implies that the Church has little to learn from a secularised culture (Arbuckle, 2016; Mellor, 2016; Taylor, 2007).

### **3.3.3.2 Restoration.**

The New Evangelisation may also be understood as a “conservative Catholic restoration” (Peterson & Vasquez, 1998, p. 327). This interpretation contends that traditional Catholicism has deteriorated because of modernity and in particular, the ecclesial reforms of the Second Vatican Council (Ranson, 2009). A restorationist approach to the New Evangelisation is to re-establish traditional Catholicism in worship and belief. It is characterised by rigidity of structures, reinforcement of dogma and the

tradition of the Church (Faggioli, 2019). Likewise it encourages a robust public expression of Catholicism (Treston, 2018). It rejects the Church's renewed understanding of mission as dialogue and engagement with the cultures and contexts.

However, this interpretation of the New Evangelisation is contested:

The term "new Evangelisation" is a concept...which causes..."problems"...It could be confused with the model of a spiritual, "Reconquista," as it is a question of reconquering lost ground. But it's not about restoration or repetition of what once was...but a new beginning, a new approach, in a new situation....Actually, this is really a process that the whole Church goes through throughout history. The Gospel is always new...(Marx cited in Nardi, 2015).

The restorationist interpretation of the New Evangelisation contrasts with a pluralist view of contemporary evangelisation which encourages engagement with secularised society through recontextualising Catholicism (Durham, 2016; Pollefeyt, 2014).

### ***3.3.3.3 Recontextualisation.***

The New Evangelisation may also be understood as the recontextualisation of the Gospel message. Historically, recontextualisation seeks to renew the Church's commitment to realising God's mission in a contemporary society (Tickle, 2008). In adapting evangelisation to address the "signs of the times" (Pope Paul VI, 1965d, No. 4), the Catholic Church is encouraged to enculturate evangelisation (Boguslawski & Martin, 2008; O'Loughlin, 2007):

All this could be expressed in the following words: what matters is to evangelise man's (sic) culture and cultures (not in a purely decorative way, as it were, by applying a thin veneer, but in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots), in the wide and rich sense which these terms have in *Gaudium et Spes*, always taking the person as one's starting-point and always coming back to the relationships of people among themselves and with God. The Gospel, and therefore Evangelisation, are certainly not identical with culture, and they are independent in regard to all cultures. Nevertheless, the kingdom which the Gospel proclaims is lived by men who are profoundly linked to a culture, and the building up of the kingdom cannot avoid borrowing the elements of human culture or cultures.

Though independent of cultures, the Gospel and Evangelisation are not necessarily incompatible with them; rather they are capable of permeating them all without becoming subject to any one of them. The split between the Gospel and culture is without a doubt the drama of our time, just as it was of other times. Therefore, every effort must be made to ensure a full Evangelisation of culture, or more correctly of cultures. They have to be regenerated by an encounter with the Gospel. But this encounter will not take place if the Gospel is not proclaimed. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 20)

This conceptualisation characterises the New Evangelisation as the re-presenting or re-proposing of the Good News for new contexts (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33). In contrast to the imposition of Church laws, decrees and customs, recontextualisation reconsiders sensitively how Church teaching applies to contemporary contexts and presents these respectfully with defensible evidence (Bevans, 2014a). There are several approaches to recontextualising as the New Evangelisation. First, the adoption of understandable language that is culturally appropriate is necessary (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 27). Second, the willingness to dialogue (Bevans, 2011; Connolly, 2015) with people and cultures is honoured:

Dialogue between the Gospel and culture is an essential component of Christian mission.... This problem is compounded by two realities: many 'left' the Church on account of its perceived rejection of modernity and modern values; increasingly, secularised people have little knowledge of—and even less interest in—Christianity, the Church or its teachings. We can no longer begin this dialogue on the basis of shared religious language given that belief in God itself is now considered a dubious proposition. Nonetheless, as we enter the new phase of post-modernity, there is genuine awakening to the need for spirituality and spiritual experience. Here is an entrance point for dialogue—not in the traditional sphere of religion, but in the secular search for spiritual meaning and values (Hall, 2007).

Finally, pre-eminent in recontextualising the Good News is the authentic witness of contemporary committed evangelisers:

... for the Church, the first means of Evangelisation is the witness of an authentically Christian life, given over to God in a communion that nothing



should destroy and at the same time given to one's neighbour with limitless zeal. As we said recently to a group of lay people, 'Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.' (Pope Paul VI, 1974, No. 67)...It is therefore primarily by her conduct and by her life that the Church will evangelise the world, in other words, by her living witness of fidelity to the Lord Jesus--the witness of poverty and detachment, of freedom in the face of the powers of this world, in short, the witness of sanctity. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 41)

Thus, in recontextualising the Christian message, the necessary dynamics for implementing authentic evangelisation are language, dialogue with people and cultures, and witness.

#### **3.3.3.4 Renewed enthusiasm.**

The New Evangelisation may also be interpreted as a the Church's renewed enthusiasm for the proclamation of the Christian message (Green, 2018). This understanding of the New Evangelisation has its genesis in the Gospel message which "make(s) all things new" (Revelations 21:5) and thus "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The vitality of the Good News underpins the *New Evangelisation*. Such an approach to evangelisation understands that this New Evangelisation is the product of a "new enthusiasm", "a new language", and "new methodologies" (Fisichella, 2012, p. 144):

Our own time, then, must be increasingly marked by a new hearing of God's word and a new Evangelisation. Recovering the centrality of the divine word in the Christian life leads us to appreciate anew the deepest meaning of the forceful appeal of Pope John Paul II: to pursue the *missio ad gentes* and vigorously to embark upon the new Evangelisation, especially in those nations where the Gospel has been forgotten or meets with indifference as a result of widespread secularism. May the Holy Spirit awaken a hunger and thirst for the word of God, and raise up zealous heralds and witnesses of the Gospel. (Pope Benedict XVI, 2010, No. 122)

The renewed enthusiasm for evangelisation is appropriate because it seeks to address the "widespread malaise and a perceived loss of institutional vitality and

direction” evident in the Catholic Church (Arbuckle, 2016, p. 56). This renewed enthusiasm has several characteristics. First, it is illustrated in a “profound openness to the place and people in which and among whom [the Church] work[s]” (Bevans & Tahaafe-Williams, 2012, p. 167). The pastoral emphasis emanates from:

... a missionary church (which) is certainly joyful, enthusiastic, and bold as it preaches and witnesses to the gospel, but such joy, enthusiasm and boldness emerges out of a church with its doors always open, a church that listens respectfully to the world that it serves, and that offers, above all, tenderness and mercy to all. (Bevans, 2014b, pp. 1–2)

Second, it is characterised by a desire to encounter and learn from all people rather than an emphasis on conversion or indoctrination (Pope Francis, 2013). Openness and clarity are hallmarks of this approach:

As Christians engage in mission, their first attitude should be one of listening, respect, learning, and discernment. But as they listen and discern carefully, they will experience the need, even the duty, to speak out. They will find creative ways to present the Christian message and be impelled to oppose injustice or advocate reform. All of this will depend on a way of reflecting theologically that will guide and support them in their missional task. (Bevans & Tahaafe-Williams, 2012, p. 173)

Finally, the “new surge of Gospel energy” (Coleridge, 2013, p. 136) engages with and responds to a new context:

In the West at least, the world will not come to the Church at this time. Therefore, the Church must go to the world, since the only alternative is for the Church to retire to some introverted, supposedly self-protective world where we Christians speak only to ourselves; and we are surely forbidden to do that. The question now is, how do we go to the world? What does this kind of new mission mean? What does it require? (Coleridge, 2013, p. 136)

Renewed enthusiasm for the Gospel also respects Christian ecumenism and the promotion of shared values and customs among believers (Lehmann, 1992). This approach to evangelisation rejects restoration interpretations by actively encouraging engagement with society’s realities (Hodgens, 2019; Rohr, 2019).

The re-framing of a new spirit of evangelisation by Pope Francis is manifest as a “performance” or “enactment” of God’s merciful embrace. In establishing an Extraordinary Year of Jubilee to focus on mercy, Francis connected New Evangelisation and the Second Vatican Council as “a new phase of history”: The Council Fathers strongly perceived, as a true breath of the Holy Spirit, a need to talk about God to men and women of their time in a more accessible way. The walls which for too long had made the Church a kind of fortress were torn down and the time had come to proclaim the Gospel in a new way. It was a new phase of the same Evangelisation that had existed from the beginning. It was a fresh undertaking for all Christians to bear witness to their faith with greater enthusiasm and conviction. The Church sensed a responsibility to be a living sign of the Father’s love in the world. (Fisichella, 2012, p. 179)

### ***3.3.3.5 Church renewal.***

Finally, the New Evangelisation may also be understood as the program for the renewal of the Catholic Church. This understanding acknowledges the New Evangelisation embracing both the Church in its traditions and contemporary society. As such, the first task of the New Evangelisation is the renewal of the Church: “The Church is an evangeliser, but she begins by being evangelised herself” (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 15).

Consequently, Church renewal through evangelisation has a threefold emphasis. First, the New Evangelisation emphasises institutional honesty as the focus of reform (Amaladoss, 2012). Such an emphasis demonstrates credibility (Rymarz, 2010a). This return to the demonstration of credibility is needed particularly in the Australian Church:

Our present experience of shame and guilt because of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia may be a good starting point for mission. Now, because of our sins of deed and omission in the area of child sexual abuse and the care of victims, we are becoming a vulnerable and much less powerful and respected church. We have been taken down off our pedestal to need forgiveness and mercy in a way we would never have chosen. Perhaps by knowing the need for mercy we may be better able to show it. It is paradoxical that this may be a better starting point for evangelisation. (Connolly, 2015, p. 400)

Second, Church renewal through evangelisation invites a new understanding of the concept of the Church. A “teaching church” is only credible if it is primarily a listening church, a “learning church” (Bevans, 2013, p. 282).

Finally, the renewal of the Church emphasises the need for the refounding of the Church and its agencies. This approach contends that the Church requires a radical return to the essence of the Good News and the person of Jesus. Thus the New Evangelisation becomes:

...an ‘opportunity’, or more properly a ‘grace’ for the Church. It is necessary because the church cannot be satisfied with structural reforms of the institution or with reflection on and public statements about moral questions. It must first of all focus on what is strictly speaking ‘theological’, on what constitutes the purpose of its existence and its mission, that is, the question of Jesus Christ and the God of Jesus Christ, the question of faith, hope and love. In concentrating on these questions, the new evangelisation comes back to what is most profound in human beings: their reason for living, that which gives them the possibility of living their humanity in its fullness. (Dumais, 2014, p. 22)

#### **3.3.4 Research on the understanding of the New Evangelisation.**

Despite the priority of the New Evangelisation for the Catholic Church as a strategy to re-engage Catholics, the concept remains contested. Further, limited research concerning its understanding has been conducted. Moreover, longitudinal research on the New Evangelisation (Table 3.13) illustrates that many Catholics are largely ignorant of the concept.

**Table 3.13***Have You Even Heard of the New Evangelisation*

Position in parish	Yes	No	Don't know	No response
Staff	43.7 %	43.7%	8.5%	4.2%
Congregation	22.8%	58.2%	12.3%	6.7%
Visitor	12%	65.3%	15.3%	7.4%
No response	22.3%	48.1%	9.6%	19.9%
Total, N= 3982	22.2%	57.6%	12.3%	8%

*Note.* N=3982. This table was developed from data drawn from “Catholic New Evangelisation: Who Has Even Heard of it?” by M. McCallion, 2012, from the University of Notre Dame blogsite, *The Catholic Conversation: From a Sociologist's Perspective*.

Seventy percent of respondents had uncertain understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation. These respondents are Sunday worshipping Catholics. Thus, there is a need for a more precise, common and specifically Roman Catholic understanding of the concept of the New Evangelisation (Imbelli, 2014; Martin, 2012; Sultmann & Brown, 2014). Nevertheless, Catholic educational and ecclesial authorities assert that Australian Catholic schools should become centres of the New Evangelisation (see Section 2.6). Moreover, teachers in Catholic schools are expected to become agents of the New Evangelisation (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007; Tynan, 2013). How this expectation is to be implemented is unclear because there is a paucity of research on teachers' understanding of the New Evangelisation.

#### ***3.3.4.1 Specific research question two.***

The New Evangelisation is the agenda of considerable ecclesial literature (Pope Francis, 2013; Pope John Paul II, 1991; Pope Paul VI, 1975). There are multiple, contested understandings of the concept (Gowdie, 2017). Moreover, there is an absence of an agreed precise understanding of the New Evangelisation among Catholics, including teachers. Nevertheless, the implementation of the New Evangelisation by teachers in Australian Catholic schools remains a priority for the Church. Moreover, there is a paucity of research regarding teacher's understandings of the New Evangelisation.

Consequently, this phenomenon generates the rationale for the second specific research question:

How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools understand the New Evangelisation?

### **3.4 The Complexities of the Contemporary Australian Catholic School**

The third concept to structure the review of the literature is the complexity of the Australian Catholic school and how this complexity contributes to teachers' experiences of responding to the imperative of the New Evangelisation. Two themes are generated which explain and structure an understanding of this theme. These are:

1. The mission of the Catholic school; and
2. The complexity of the Australian Catholic School and the New Evangelisation.

#### **3.4.1 The mission of the Catholic school.**

The Catholic school derives its purpose from the mission of the Catholic Church which is to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 8). Jesus used the metaphor of the Kingdom of God as the central tenet of his life and teaching (O'Murchu, 2010). The Kingdom of God was Jesus' vision for how life should be lived (Struckmeyer, 2010). This vision presented a radical challenge to political and religious institutions because it proclaimed a message of justice and compassion. In particular, it revealed God as a loving Father for all, especially the poor (Benjamin, 2010; O'Murchu, 2011). Beginning with the early followers of Jesus, the mission of the Christian Church has been to articulate and enable the realisation of the Kingdom (Pope Paul VI, 1965c). Consequently, the mission of the Church is to continue to proclaim and realise the vision of Jesus for the Kingdom of God in the world (Bevans, 2009).

Catholic schools embrace the mission of Jesus in a specific way within the Church by authentically nurturing the humanity (CCE, 1998) of the school community "as a place of integral education of the human person through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation, directed at creating a synthesis between faith, culture and life" (CCE, 1998, No. 4). In providing this education, the Catholic school continues to make the Kingdom of God a lived experience (CCE, 1988). Teachers in Catholic schools are catalysts to the realisation of the mission of Jesus as revealed in the document produced by the Congregation for Catholic Education:

In the Catholic school, ‘prime responsibility for creating this unique Christian school climate rests with the teachers, as individuals and as a community’ (CCE, 1988, No. 26). Teaching has an extraordinary moral depth and is one of man's most excellent and creative activities, for the teacher does not write on inanimate material, but on the very spirits of human beings. The personal relations between the teacher and the students, therefore, assume an enormous importance and are not limited simply to giving and taking. Moreover, we must remember that teachers and educators fulfil a specific Christian vocation and share an equally specific participation in the mission of the Church, to the extent that ‘it depends chiefly on them whether the Catholic school achieves its purpose’ (Pope Paul VI, 1965a, No. 8; 1998, No. 19).

Catholic schools have been integral to the provision of education in Australia for over 180 years. The Australian Catholic school system has developed considerably (see Section 2.3) and,

compared to previous generations, today’s Australian Catholic schools are relatively well-equipped and staffed by well-qualified, committed teachers. Parents, students and staff of Catholic schools strive to be Christ-centred communities which witness to the Faith. Like all Australian schools, Catholic schools are accountable to governments and their local communities for meeting all the teaching and learning requirements of the state. They also have distinctive goals and features which derive from a core of philosophical and theological truths which are central to their character and mission. They are highly regarded by the Australian community. (NCEC, 2013, p. 1)

Further, 2016 research on the leadership and identity of Australian Catholic schools (Sultmann & Brown, 2016) indicates that the identity of the Australian Catholic school is integrated within the identity of the Church such that:

[There are] two integrated and foundational characteristics: being an instrument of Christ—the Living Word—and being a sign of His life—Sacred Witness—offer an image for life within the Catholic school. Within this framework, the Church, the pilgrim body of believers, and the Catholic school, proceeding from the heart of this assembly [*ex corde ecclesia*], are sacramental in nature as they seek to serve and make visible the compassion, mercy and forgiveness of God. In this

fashion, as was the case for the early Church: “Whoever came in contact with one of these believing communities was truly in contact with the presence of the risen Lord....The community was effectively acting as a Sacrament of the risen Christ....It was the entire existence and activity of the community that was sacramental” (Cooke, 1983 cited in Sultmann & Brown, 2016, p. 87)

Consequently, Australian Catholic education has become increasingly focussed on the implementation of the New Evangelisation (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007; CCE, 1998). Not surprisingly, this mission has supposedly become the responsibility of teachers (Catholic Education Office, Sydney, 2012). Accordingly, ecclesial and Catholic educational authorities expect that Catholic schools “are truly Catholic in their identity and life; are centres of ‘the new evangelisation’; enable...students to achieve high levels of ‘Catholic religious literacy’ and practice; (and) are led and staffed by people who will contribute to these goals” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007).

However, the prioritisation of the New Evangelisation presents a number of complexities.

### **3.4.2 The complexity of the Australian Catholic School and the New Evangelisation.**

Australian education is supposedly characterised by the twin principles of equity and excellence (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008; COAG, 2019). Furthermore, it operates in a complex and rapidly changing dynamic and “is delivered in diverse contexts across eight States and Territories in government and non-government schools, [with the] common aspiration [being] that all young Australians will become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens” (COAG, 2018, p. 3).

Catholic schools are integral to Australian education because these schools educate nearly 20% of the Australian school-aged population (NCEC, 2016a). Moreover, Catholic education is also Australia’s largest non-government employer (Dixon et al., 2017). These schools are highly regarded by families and students (Benjamin, 2010; Flynn & Mok, 2002; McLaughlin, 2000; Rymarz & Graham, 2006). Not surprisingly then, Catholic education receives substantial government funding (NCEC, 2016).



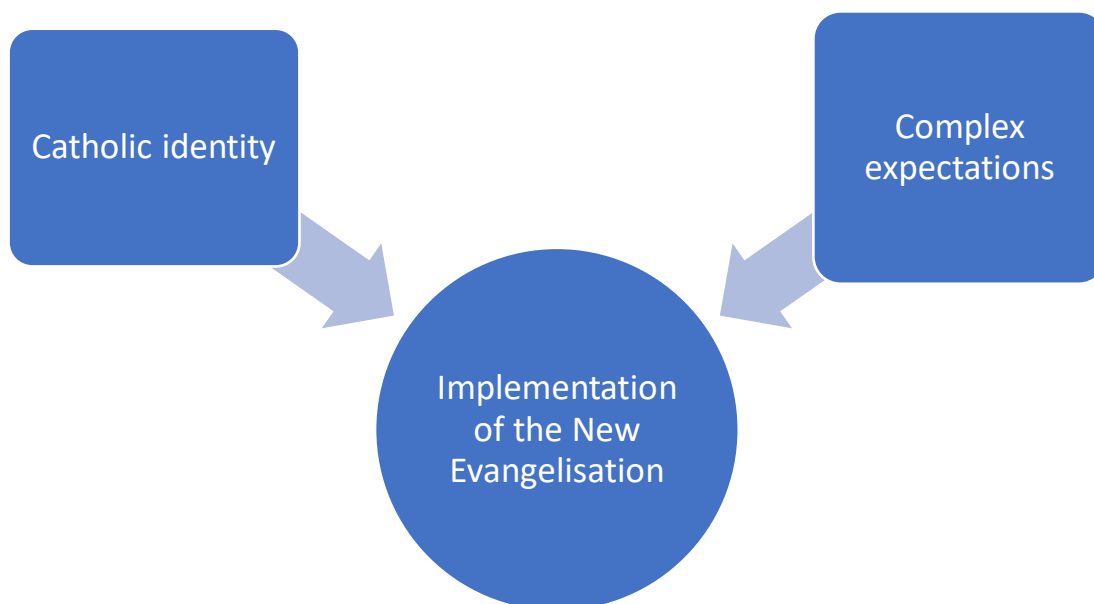
Furthermore, Australian Catholic schools contribute to the achievement of multiple educational outcomes for students (see Section 2.3). These achievements occur within schools and systems of schools with a unified pedagogical framework (Conway & Andrews, 2016) and defined processes for ongoing school improvement and quality assurance (Turkington, Ghantous, & Crook, 2016). These schools also contribute successfully to the evangelising mission of the Church and are perceived by Australian Catholic educational and ecclesial authorities as centres of the New Evangelisation (see Section 2.6). Moreover, teachers in Australian Catholic schools are expected to become agents of the New Evangelisation (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007; Tynan, 2013). However, the review of the literature generates two themes that illustrate how the increasing complexity of Australian Catholic schools influences teachers' experiences of implementing the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools. These are:

1. Catholic identity; and
2. Complex expectations

These complexities are illustrated in Figure 3.3.

**Figure 3.3**

*The Complexities of the Australian Catholic School and the New Evangelisation*



#### ***3.4.2.1 Catholic identity.***

The term Catholic identity or Catholicity addresses a school's fidelity to the practices, teaching and traditions of Roman Catholicism (Chambers, 2015). Moreover, Catholic identity justifies how a school's curriculum, routines and priorities reflect Catholic beliefs and values (O'Donoghue, 2017). Multiple characteristics contribute to the identity of a Catholic school (Pollefeyt & Bouwens, 2010). Some identified characteristics are illustrated in Table 3.14.

**Table 3.14***Characteristics of Catholic School Identity Within the United States of America and Australia*

Category	USA	Queensland	Common
Culture	The school has a strong community of faith	The school is a community of faith	Community of faith
Culture	The school's day/each class begins with prayer	Prayer is integral to the school's daily life for staff and students	Prayer in the daily life of the school
Culture	Schoolwide liturgies occur periodically	The school community celebrate liturgies frequently	Celebration of school liturgies
Culture	Students participate in Christian service	The school engages in outreach and social justice programs	Outreach and Christian service
Culture	A crucifix is present in every classroom	Christian symbols are present throughout the school	Display of Christian symbols
People	The Principal is Catholic	The Principal is Catholic	The Principal is Catholic
People	The teacher of religion is Catholic	The teachers of religion are Catholic	Teachers of religion are Catholic
People	The vast majority of students are Catholic	The vast majority of students are Catholic	Vast majority of students are Catholic
People	The vast majority of teachers are Catholic	The vast majority of teachers are Catholic	The vast majority of teachers are Catholic
Curriculum	The Religion Course presents the teachings of the Church	Religious Education programs present the teachings of the Catholic Church	Religious Education programs present the teachings of the Church
Curriculum	Catholic teachings are integrated into academic subjects other than religion courses	The integration of Catholic teachings across all learning areas is planned intentionally	Integration of Catholic teachings is present across the formal curriculum

*Note.* Adapted from *The Characteristics of Catholic Schools: Comparative Perspectives from the USA and Queensland, Australia*, Vol. 21, by J. Gleeson, J. O’Gorman, P. Goldberg, and M. O’Neill, 2018, p. 88. Subtle variations in the descriptors in the table are accounted for in the jurisdictional differences that exist in the United States and Australia, as explained on pp. 97ff by the authors, J. Gleeson, J. O’Gorman, P. Goldberg, and M. O’Neill, 2018.

These characteristics nurture a school’s Catholic identity and generate eleven descriptors of Catholic school identity. The comparative data representing teachers’ assessments of the essential elements of Catholic identity are illustrated in Table 3.15.

**Table 3.15**

*Teacher Perceptions of Catholic School Identity Characteristics Across the United States and Australia*

Characteristic	Category	% US teachers (n=3389)	% Queensland teachers (n=2287)	% US teachers – secondary (n=708)	% Queensland teachers – secondary (n=969)
Community of faith	Culture	91	58	85	49
Prayer in the daily life of the school	Culture	92	57	84	41
Celebration of school liturgies	Culture	89	41	82	33
Outreach and Christian service	Culture	87	52	82	54
Display of Christian symbols	Culture	77	39	62	29
The Principal is Catholic	People	74	46	63	43
Teachers of religion are Catholic	People	82	15	76	14
Vast majority of students are Catholic	People	15	5	12	3
Vast majority of teachers are Catholic	People	39	11	22	6
Religious Education programs present the teachings of the Church	Curriculum	90	45	85	35
Integration of Catholic teachings across the formal curriculum	Curriculum	61	15	48	12

*Note.* This table was developed from data drawn from *The Characteristics of Catholic Schools: Comparative Perspectives from the USA and Queensland, Australia*, Vol. 21, by J. Gleeson, J. O’Gorman, P. Goldberg, and M. O’Neill, 2018.

Several observations regarding teachers' understanding of the essential characteristics of contemporary Catholic schools are generated from these data. First, an essential characteristic of the identity of Catholic schools is the religious affiliation of students and teachers. Ecclesial authorities contend that:

If Catholic schools are to succeed...it will be essential that: all those appointed as Principals, Assistant Principals and Religious Education Coordinators (RECs) are faithful Catholics who are ready to embrace the mission of the Catholic school today and to lead and inspire their staff and parents accordingly; as far as possible only practising and knowledgeable Catholics are charged with the task of teaching RE [Religious Education] in our schools; all teachers are committed to the mission of the school and teach and live in accordance with the teachings of the Church. (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 16).

However, fewer than half of Gleeson's Australian teachers believe that a Principal's being Catholic is essential for the maintenance of a school's Catholic identity. Even fewer teachers accepted that having a majority of Catholic teachers is essential to the school's Catholic identity. In Queensland, only 6% of teachers believed that the majority of teachers being Catholic is necessary to ensure the school's Catholicity. Finally, even fewer teachers believe that the Catholic identity of a school depends on any specific percentage of students being Catholic. Only 5 % of Australian participants believe that Catholic school identity is contingent upon ensuring that the majority of students are Catholic. To summarise, in contrast to the opinions of ecclesial authorities, these data indicate that many teachers in Australian Catholic schools believe that Catholic identity is not contingent upon the Catholicity of teachers or students.

This supposed complexity is further illuminated when considering non-Catholic staff and students in Australian Catholic schools. Australian Catholic education has experienced an increase in non-Catholic students from 24% to 31% during the years 2006–14. Table 3.16 illustrates the growth in student enrolment, 2006–14.

**Table 3.16***Catholic and non-Catholic Students, 2006–2014*

Year	Number of Catholic students	% of Catholic students	Number of non-Catholic students	% of non-Catholic students
2006	520,924	76%	165,718	24%
2007	522,243	75%	170,551	25%
2008	520,074	75%	176,916	25%
2009	518,368	74%	184, 925	26%
2010	513,951	72%	203,278	28%
2011	520,951	71%	212,237	29%
2012	522,190	71%	212,237	29%
2013	526,077	70%	223,584	30%
2014	525,917	69%	231,312	31%

*Note.* Adapted from *Australian Catholic Schools 2014*, by the National Catholic Education Commission, 2016a, p. 28.

The percentage of Catholic students enrolled in Australian Catholic schools has declined from 76% to 69%. Likewise, the percentage of non-Catholic teachers employed in Catholic secondary schools is 27% (see Section 3.2.1). To summarise, 31% of students and 27% of teachers in Catholic in contemporary Australian Catholic schools are not Catholic (Hall, Nestor, & Sultmann, 2018; NCEC, 2016a). Such a trend generates a concern for some because

...there will be a critical point at which it is no longer valid to describe a school as a work of the Catholic Church. It will be determined by the moment when there is no longer a critical number of people in the governance and work of the school who are active in their Christian discipleship and their ecclesial membership, and who have the moral authority to shape the identity and purpose of the school accordingly. (Green, 2018, p. 98)

This opinion echoes the understanding of Australia’s Bishops and Catholic educational authorities as they insist that the Catholicity of staff and students is a prerequisite to the promotion of a Catholic school identity: “There [must be] a ‘critical mass’ of Catholic leaders and staff in our schools” (Catholic Bishops of New South

Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 16). Consequently, the spiritual formation of teachers and students in Catholic schools is a priority (Gowdie, 2017; NCEC, 2017; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016). In contrast, the data indicate that most teachers do not regard the Catholic affiliation of staff or students as essential to the maintenance of a school's Catholicity. Clearly then, such a reality influences how schools implement the New Evangelisation.

Further, Table 3.16 illustrates the contrasting views of Catholic teachers in Australia and the United States regarding Religious Education and the integration of Catholic values into the curriculum. Most respondents in this study do not regard the Catholicity of Religious Education teachers or the integration of the Catholic faith into the curriculum as essential to the school's Catholic identity. Notably, only 14% of respondents in Australian Catholic secondary schools indicated that it is essential to the school's Catholic identity that teachers of Religious Education are Catholic. Further, only 12% of secondary school participants regard the integration of Catholic teachings across the curriculum as essential. Moreover, only 35% of these teachers indicate that it is essential for the school's Catholic identity that Religious Education programs present Catholic teachings.

This lack of unanimity of teachers' beliefs influences how teachers implement the New Evangelisation. It was identified more than a decade ago by Australian Bishops:

If Catholic schools are to be centres of the new evangelisation: the life and activity in the school would be the context for a personal encounter with Christ and would promote, and never contradict, the teachings of the Church; all those involved in our schools would appreciate their roles in receiving and proclaiming the Good News by word and deed, and by the example of their lives. (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 13)

These phenomena illustrate the complexity of Australian Catholic schools and

bring[s] into question traditional assumptions about the clientele of Catholic schools (Who belongs in the school?), the religious activity in Catholic schools (What is possible in catechesis?) and the ecclesial nature of Catholic schools (Is the school a faith community?). In short, this issue challenges the very nature and purpose of Catholic schools. (Chambers, 2015, p. 57)

Ironically, despite these trends, Australian Catholic schools remain popular (Dowling et al., 2009).

Finally, Table 3.16 indicates that the teachers in Catholic schools regard the overall culture of a Catholic school as essential to its Catholic identity. While less consistent than their American counterparts, teachers in Australian Catholic schools regard the communal nature of the school as essential to its Catholicity. Most of the Australian participants regard the community of faith, daily prayer, outreach and Christian service as essential to the Catholic identity of the school. Approximately one third of all participants in Catholic secondary schools regard the celebration of school liturgies and the display of Christian symbols as essential. These data illustrate the largely positive experience of teachers and students in Australian Catholic schools (Mellor, 2018; Rymarz & Cleary, 2016).

However, most Australian students and teacher's engagement with Catholic culture, belief and teaching is confined to Catholic schools (see Section 2.4). This trend is illustrated in Table 3.17.



**Table 3.17***Mass-Attending Lay Teachers in Australian Catholic Schools*

Indicator	Teachers (N=1243)	Mass Attenders (N=31075)
Average age	50	55
Female	74%	61%
Born in Australia	60%	74%
First marriage	68%	62%
Always strengthened by Mass	27%	31%
Have a leadership role in the parish	75%	64%
Committed to parish vision	48%	38 %
Support parish innovation	73%	61%
Involved in parish groups	64%	42%
Visited someone in hospital	59%	48%
Helped someone in crisis	50%	33%
Gave possessions to the needy	46%	32%
Donated to a charity	87%	71%
God an important reality in my life	37%	43%
Weekly private devotion	68%	63%
At ease talking about faith	61%	52%

*Note.* N=1243. Data for this table were drawn from “Mass attending teachers in Catholic schools”, produced by the Pastoral Research Office from material shown in *Pastoral Research Online*, (27), 4, in 2015.

Several observations regarding teachers in Australian Catholic schools can be made from these data. First, Mass-attending lay teachers are more likely to be female, actively involved in the parish and younger than other Mass attenders. However, these teachers are less likely to indicate they are strengthened by Sunday Mass attendance or to see God as an important reality in their lives than other Mass attenders. They are, however, more likely than other Mass attenders to participate in charitable activities and to have a weekly private devotional practice. While 92% indicate a strong sense of Catholic identity, only 46% regard the Catholic parish as important in their life. However, these teachers represent only 4% of Mass attenders and only 2% of the 59,000 teachers employed in Catholic schools (NCEC, 2016a).

These data further illustrate the complexity of teachers' experience in implementing the New Evangelisation. The data suggest that the primary engagement with Catholicism for most Australian Catholics does not extend beyond the experience in Catholic schools (Franchi & Rymarz, 2017). This is also the case for many teachers in Catholic schools with only 25% of Catholic staff reporting engagement in regular worship (Hall et al., 2018; NCEC, 2016a). Catholic schools are arguably then, the primary conduit for Catholic belief and practice in Australia. Furthermore, historically, Australian Catholic schools relied on clergy and religious who experienced considerable formation in Catholic belief and practice for evangelisation (see Section 3.2.1). Nowadays, the effectiveness of the implementation of the New Evangelisation depends on lay teachers and their commitment to and understanding of the Mission of God and role the Catholic Church in this Mission (Arbuckle, 2016). However, many of these teachers are disconnected from parish life and sacramental practice and, in some cases, may not even be Catholic. These data suggest that teachers' spirituality and religious practice limit their ability to strengthen and articulate Catholic identity in Australian Catholic schools (Elshof, 2015; Shields, 2018). Nevertheless, regardless of their religious affiliation, teachers in Catholic schools are expected to support Catholic beliefs and practices as well as participate in ongoing formation (Rymarz, 2011). These data indicate that teachers in Australian Catholic schools experience the complexity of the increasing percentage of non-Catholic teachers and students, the declining relevance and adherence to Catholic belief and practice, and the disaffiliation of Catholic teachers and students from the broader Catholic Church in Catholic schools. Consequently, any implementation of the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic schools

needs to acknowledge and deal with the fact that a significant number of baptised Catholics 'have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel' (Pope John Paul II, 1991 , 33). We can no longer presume 'that all students, families, and teachers are fully committed or indeed involved with local parishes and worship' (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009, p. 310). Parents still send their children to Catholic schools, without necessarily instilling in them a deep sense of faith and belonging. The majority of young Catholic adults—the age cohort of many parents of our students, as well as the many teachers in Catholic schools—are described as being unclear about the beliefs of the Church:

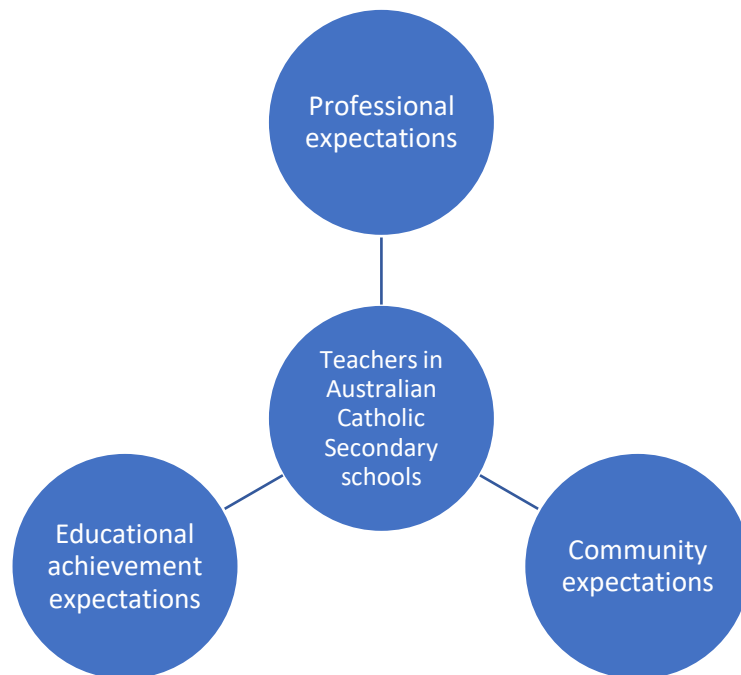
expressing disagreement with many of its moral teachings, and less likely to participate in the Church’s sacramental life than the prior generation (Smith & Snell, 2009). Students are living their lives, going to school, and sensing perhaps the call of God in the midst of questions, doubts, and pressures that are both unsettling and disorienting in terms of traditional religious teachings. Many of their parents share that uncertainty and choose lifestyles that would be seen by the Church as ‘outside the official norms that define Catholic faithfulness’ (Smith, 2005, p. 194). In the absence of traditional formative influences, the promise of Catholic education may appear as ‘mission impossible’ (Shields, 2018, p. 90).

#### **3.4.2.2. Complex expectations.**

Teachers in all sectors of Australian education also experience increasingly complex expectations (Easthope & Easthope, 2000; Johari, Yean Tan, & Tjik Zulkarnain, 2018). The review of the literature generates a threefold categorisation of the complex expectations of teachers in Catholic secondary schools. These increasing expectations are reflected in the increased workloads of Australian teachers (Gonski et al., 2018), and arguably mitigate against teachers’ capacity to engage in the implementation of the New Evangelisation. These categories are illustrated in Figure 3.4:

**Figure 3.4**

*Teachers in Australian Catholic Secondary School—Categories of Complex Expectations*



The first category of increased expectations concerns the increasing professional expectations of teachers in Australian schools. The number of teachers employed in Australia has continued to increase, with the growth in the Catholic school sector five times that of the government sector (Pink, 2011). The witness and work of teachers in Catholic schools contribute to the positive orientation of students to Catholic schools, and to each student's experience of the Catholic faith (McQuillan, 2011; Wilkinson, 2011). This substantial workforce in Catholic schools is well-educated and predominantly lay. In Catholic schools, the professional expectations of teachers have resulted in an increase in the number of teachers achieving academic qualifications in Religious Education and Theology in addition to their teacher qualifications (Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Board, 2010).

However, as the quality of teaching is well-established as integral to student achievement (Dinham, 2016; Hattie, 2012), many nations including Australia have adopted professional accreditation standards for teachers as a "a policy mechanism to assess and enhance teacher quality" (Clinton et al., 2015, p. 9). Consequently, teachers in all Australian schools are expected to achieve and maintain professional standards as educators in addition to their educational qualifications. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2011) are designed around 37 prescribed competencies for teacher self-reflection, professional development and accreditation and provide a national framework for teacher certification:

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students. The Standards do this by providing a framework which makes clear the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required across teachers' careers. They present a common understanding and language for discourse between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations, professional associations and the public. Teacher standards also inform the development of professional learning goals, provide a framework by which teachers can judge the success of their learning and assist self-reflection and self-assessment (Yinger & Hendricks-Lee, 2000). Teachers can use the

Standards to recognise their current and developing capabilities, professional aspirations and achievements (AITSL, 2011, p. 2).

The implementation of professional standards by teachers in Australian secondary schools is a relatively new expectation. Table 3.18 illustrates the progress of the implementation the Australian Professional Standards among secondary teachers during the period in which the research was conducted.

**Table 3.18**

*Evaluation of the Implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers–Secondary Teachers*

Descriptor	2013 Average result	2015 Average result
Knowledge of standards	2.98/6 Fair	3.22/6 Fair
Positive attitude to standards	3.63/6 Somewhat disagree	3.84/6 Somewhat disagree
Intention to implement the standards in the next six months	3.71/6 Somewhat disagree	3.82/6 Somewhat disagree

*Note.* 2013 N=1176; 2015 n=943. Adapted from Figures 7–20 in *Evaluation of the Implementation of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers: Final Report*, by J. Clinton et al., December 2015, pp. 28–42.

There are several observations that can be derived from the data. On the one hand, these data indicate that not all secondary teachers adhere to the expectations of them to standardise and maintain their professional accreditation. Further, as this requirement is additional to the minimal and ongoing qualifications required of any educator in Australia, the data indicate that almost one third of teachers surveyed had a negative attitude towards the standards or had no intention of implementing them in the short term. Thus, these data indicate both the complex additional professional expectations of teachers and their inconsistent implementation.

Second, teachers in Australian schools experience an increasing number of expectations to ensure appropriate educational achievement for all students. The review of the literature generates a category of expectations broadly identified as educational expectations. These educational expectations encompass a range of educational imperatives including the introduction of national standardised testing (Polesel, Rice, & Dulfer, 2014) and the implementation of the Australian National Curriculum (Bentley &

Clifton-Savage, 2017). These educational expectations have increased the complexity of teachers' work and the expectations of all teachers for student achievement (Bentley & Clifton-Savage, 2017; Klenowski & Wyatt-Smith, 2012).

The phenomenon of assessment is particularly evident in high stakes national standardised testing, such as the National Assessment Programme for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN). NAPLAN is the measure by which the literacy and numeracy skills of students in Years Three, Five, Seven and Nine in Australian schools are assessed (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2019b). Participation and public reporting of individual school results in NAPLAN is a requirement, linked to Government funding, for all Australian schools (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2019a). NAPLAN exemplifies the intensification and complexity of teachers' workload and expectations of them (Easthope & Easthope, 2000; Malloy, 2015). A critique of the Australia's 2013 Senate Committee Inquiry into the effectiveness of NAPLAN (Harris et al., 2013) indicates some of the consequences of national test results such as NAPLAN, namely:

The (mis)use of national test results to evaluate teacher effectiveness includes discouraging teachers from working with the neediest students and schools; diminishment of teacher voice and morale; narrowing curriculum and pedagogic practices and teaching to the test; encouraging practices that aim at learning outcomes that can be measured; marginalising open-ended problem solving that in turn lowers curriculum standards; and a reduction in collegiality that sees what has been called the privatisation of classrooms as teachers increasingly teach behind closed doors. (Harris et al., 2013, p. 38)

Notwithstanding the reservations, these educational expectations are recognised as a national priority in Australian schools:

To support excellence in education, school systems and schools need to adapt to changing contexts and needs. There must be continuous improvement across each part of the education system, from curriculum, reporting and assessment models to workforce development and community and parent and carer engagement. School systems and schools must maintain a focus on innovation and improvement to ensure results move upwards and Australian students catch up to their global peers. Australia needs to start by setting higher expectations for students,

educators and schools, and rejecting the idea that there are natural performance plateaus. We must help our school systems and schools to adapt and innovate in response to changes in their environment or performance, and transparently report progress against outcomes. We must limit the burden of non-core activities, such as administrative tasks, on schools and their leaders, so they can concentrate on instructional leadership and help teachers to maximise the learning growth of their students. (Gonski et al., 2018, p. 6)

Consequently, there exist increasing expectations that teachers are responsible for the achievement of a range of educational outcomes, such as in NAPLAN. These contribute to the increasing workloads and complex expectations experienced by teachers in Australian secondary schools.

Finally, the review of the literature generates a category of complex expectations broadly classified as community expectations. This categorisation incorporates a range of expectations of teachers which find their genesis in the Australian community's expectations that "all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens" (MCEETYA , 2008, p. 9). The Australian Government's goals for young Australians as articulated in the *Melbourne Declaration on the Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008) indicate its aspiration that all young Australians

have a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical wellbeing; have a sense of optimism about their lives and the future; are enterprising, show initiative and use their creative abilities; develop personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others; have the knowledge, skills, understanding and values to establish and maintain healthy, satisfying lives. (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 10)

The prioritisation of these National Goals in Australian schools is evident in the increasing responsibility of schools and their teachers for the mental health and wellbeing of students. This commitment is made explicit in the *National Safe Schools Framework* (MCEETYA , 2003). This Framework identifies nine elements which constitute the promotion of students' safety and wellbeing through

defined structures and strategies for enhancing students wellbeing; [the] provision of multiple opportunities for students to develop a sense of meaning and purpose; [the] adoption of strengths-based approaches to student learning and participation; [and the] provision of a range of opportunities for students ownership and decision-making, student voice and peer teaching. (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, 2013, p. 8)

Schools are recognised as a key setting to both address and promote the mental health and wellbeing of students (Anderson & Graham, 2016; Graham, Phelps, Maddison, & Fitzgerald, 2011). However, the expectation that teachers both promote student wellbeing and are responsible for their mental health outcomes is relatively recent (Mazzer, 2013). Table 3.19 illustrates Australian secondary teachers' role and perceived efficacy in supporting student mental health.

**Table 3.19**

*Australian Secondary Teachers' Role and Perceived Efficacy in Supporting Student Mental Health*

Australian teachers' role and perceived efficacy in supporting student mental health	
Total teachers:	21
Female	11
Male	10
Schools	16
Age Range	23–65 years (Mean: 37.9 years)
Experience	7 weeks – 49 years (Mean: 12 years)
Role Breadth	Participants indicate that: Mental health is part of the job There exist unclear boundaries of accountability and responsibility for teachers Supporting mental health of students is an expectation of them
Self-Efficacy	Participants indicate that: They have varied levels of confidence in supporting student wellbeing They fear saying the “wrong” thing in regard to students’ wellbeing Teachers have limited imitations of knowledge and skill

*Note.* This table was developed from data drawn from “Teachers' Role Breadth and Perceived Efficacy in Supporting Student Mental Health,” by K. R. Mazzer and D. J. Rickwood, 2014, *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 8(1), pp. 1–13.



A twofold observation arises from these data. On the one hand, secondary teachers understand that the promotion and support of student wellbeing is now inherent in their responsibilities. However, these teachers experience limited self-efficacy in regard to the support of students' wellbeing because they are unclear in regard to their limited knowledge and skills and unclear accountabilities:

Overall, teachers saw this as a fundamental part of their role as a teacher but expressed concerns that they lacked the knowledge and skills required to fully address their students' mental health needs. In particular, they feared saying the 'wrong' thing to vulnerable young people, as well as problems juggling the many demands involved in their expanding role (Mazzer & Rickwood, 2014, p. 10).

Therefore, the community expectation that teachers will support and promote student wellbeing is at odds with the capacity of teachers in secondary schools to do so (Bache, Reardon, & Anand, 2016). Consequently, teachers experience complex community expectations of them for student mental health and wellbeing.

Thus, teachers in Australian schools experience an increase in the number of professional, educational and community expectations. This creates a dilemma for teachers because they are required to prioritise these demands. Consequently, depending on their prioritisation, teachers have varying capacity or willingness to engage with New Evangelisation initiatives. These complex expectations contribute to the challenges teachers experience in responding to the imperative of the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools.

#### ***3.4.2.3 Specific research question three.***

The review of the literature indicates that many influences contribute to the complexity of the Australian Catholic secondary school in Australia. The twofold complexity of contemporary Catholic identity and the increasing expectations of teachers characterise these schools. The review of the literature indicates that the increasing complexity of Australian Catholic schools influences teachers' experiences of implementing the New Evangelisation. This phenomenon generates the rationale for the third specific research question:

How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

## **Chapter Four**

### **Design of the Research**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research is to explore how teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation.

The research questions that focus the conduct of the research design are:

- How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?
- How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?
- How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

This chapter explains and justifies the research design and explains the theoretical foundations of the research design. The research methodology for the selection of participants is explained and justified. Data gathering strategies, stages of data gathering and the methods used in the analysis of data are discussed, and ethical issues relating to this research are examined.

#### **4.2 Theoretical Framework**

As the purpose of the study is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation, the research paradigm of Interpretivism has been adopted. The interpretivist paradigm has its basis in the premise that social interaction is the basis for knowledge (O'Donoghue, 2018). In order to gain an understanding of these teachers' experience of the New Evangelisation, an epistemological framework of constructionism has been chosen for this study. Symbolic interactionism is the theoretical perspective. The framework is illustrated in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1***Theoretical Framework for the Research Design*

Theoretical framework	Interpretivism
Epistemology	Constructionism
Theoretical perspective	Symbolic interactionism
Methodology	Multi-site case study
Participants	Purposive selection
Methods	Document analysis Semi-structured interviews

**4.2.1 Epistemology.**

Research concerns the development of new knowledge. There are various explanations for how knowledge is developed and these epistemologies provide a philosophical basis for understanding and explaining how humans know what they know, and how this knowledge is then accepted as valid (Crotty, 1998; O'Donoghue, 2018). Constructionism is the epistemology chosen for this study and underpins the design of the research.

Constructionism is an epistemology that asserts that knowledge and meaning is constructed by people in their social context (Crotty, 1998). People come to know what they know, and construct meaning through interactions with others in their social context (Crotty, 1998). Knowledge then is not a commodity that is found, but rather meaning is constructed and evolved in a context (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). Culture and history shape the context and influence the construction of meaning and knowledge as individuals interact with each other (O'Donoghue, 2018). As the primary means of interaction between people, language in itself shapes meaning and is the means by which individuals, in their unique context, communicate and construct knowledge (Crotty, 1998).

The fundamental concept of constructionism is that people do not live in a world of objective realities but in a world negotiated by humans in context (Stahl, 2003). Consequently, constructionism is the appropriate paradigm to frame this research since it aimed to explore understandings of the New Evangelisation in the school context.

There are three reasons for the adoption of a constructionist epistemology for this study. First, teachers' experience in schools informs their work and shapes the construction of their own knowledge and the meaning they ascribe to their various experiences. Each teacher's experience of the phenomenon of the New Evangelisation is

valid. The history and context of each school is also unique and informs how teachers come to understand their work, and specifically, the nature of the New Evangelisation in their context.

Second, pivotal in the construction of teachers' knowledge are their interactions with others. These interactions are reliant on language (Darlaston-Jones, 2007). Language as the primary means of social interaction is the means to negotiate an understanding of the New Evangelisation and its implementation. Informed by this epistemological understanding, the use of and interaction through language is critical to the research design and methodology.

Finally, a constructionist epistemology is appropriate to the research design as it acknowledges the co-construction of meaning between participants and in their interactions as they implement the New Evangelisation. In addition, a double hermeneutical process was in play because the researcher made meaning from multiple, possibly contrary understandings of the participant's perspectives (Norreklit, 2006). The research process, and thus its design, was informed by an understanding of this process of co-construction of meaning between the researcher and many participants.

A constructionist epistemology is appropriate for this study because each participant's context, the use of language, and an understanding that participants construct knowledge and meaning in their social context are understood to be the way that people know what they know. It is this epistemology that informs the design of the research.

#### **4.2.2 Theoretical perspective.**

A theoretical perspective is the point of view that guides the researcher (Crotty, 1998). A number of theoretical perspectives exist within the interpretivist paradigm and symbolic interactionism is the perspective chosen for this research as it complements both the constructionist epistemology and methodology adopted for this research.

Symbolic interactionism is the theoretical perspective that suggests that meaning is constructed by individuals in their interaction with others primarily by using symbols derived from the culture (O'Donoghue, 2018). Symbolic interactionism asserts that "human beings attach their own meaning to things" arising from social interactions (O'Donoghue, 2018, p. 19). People thus learn how to make sense of their world in their interactions with others and through the use of symbols, particularly language. This point

of view guides the researcher as it provides a theoretical perspective based on the theory that individuals within their social world create meaning (Stake, 2004).

This perspective is relevant in researching teachers' experience of the New Evangelisation. This theoretical perspective provides the researcher with a number of premises that underpin the research. First, human beings create meaning through social interaction in a given context. Further, these social interactions lead to changes in people's understandings and therefore, symbolic interactionism holds that meaning is not static but is adjusted as new information arises through interactions with others (O'Donoghue, 2018). This is relevant for the study as teachers interact with others in their school context and beyond, and these interactions shape their understanding of the New Evangelisation and its subsequent implementation in schools. This premise underpins the research design.

Second, symbolic interactionism is premised on the understanding that the creation of meaning is reliant on symbols, especially language. Symbolic interaction offers a lens for the study in suggesting that the meaning ascribed to various terms not only arises and is shaped by the social context, but that language is pivotal in meaning-making. Language is pivotal in teachers' understanding the New Evangelisation because there are multiple and varied levels of understandings of the New Evangelisation. Further, the meaning ascribed in this case to the New Evangelisation by teachers informed the nature of the implementation of the New Evangelisation in their social context.

### **4.3 Methodology**

Research methodology is the "strategy, plan of action, process and design lying behind the choice of particular methods" selected for the research (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The research methodology is a framework that provides an explanation for the choice of research methods selected for the research (Crotty, 1998, p. 40). Case study is the methodology adopted for this study.

Case study is an in-depth exploration of a contemporary phenomenon within a specific context (Creswell, 2008; Degenhardt & Duignan, 2010). A case study approach offers an understanding of a phenomenon for those in that context (Merriam, 1998). Time, place and people bind the case that is explored. As such, the purpose of a case study is not to represent the world, but to represent a specific case.

There are five characteristics of case study methodology relevant to this study. First, a case study approach encourages the reporting of an interpretation of the participants' experiences and perspectives of a single "contemporary phenomenon within its real life context" (Yin, 2009, p. 19). Second, a case study offers the exploration of the unique features of a specific case using multiple and diverse sources of evidence generating a rich description of a real life phenomenon for this study (Creswell & Poth, 2016). A case study also ensures that the voices of participants are heard. The unique features of a specific context may be lost in large-scale data gathering (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2002). By employing multiple methods to gather data and by focusing on a specific case, this research methodology illuminates the experience of participants within their contemporary context (Tellis, 1997a). Moreover, a case study explores a specific real life, bounded case. The strength of case study is its ability to generate understandings of a specific context. In so doing, the case study may lead to improved outcomes for relevant stakeholders, many of whom were participants in the study. Finally, a case study explores the respondents' perspectives rather than portrays the researcher's constructs (Flyvberg, 2006). As a methodology for research, case study is justified as it allows for the voice of the participants to be heard, explained, described and better understood (Tellis, 1997a).

Case study methodology is appropriate for the research for three reasons. First, this methodology allows for multiple sources of evidence to be used to focus on social phenomenon (Yin, 2009). By employing multiple methods to gather data and by focusing on a specific case, this research methodology illuminates the experience of participants within their contemporary context (Tellis, 1997a). This is the explicit purpose of this study on the New Evangelisation. Second, case study methodology is appropriate for the research as the iterative nature of this methodology is robust and allows for generalisations about a particular bounded context. These generalisations, while limited in their application to other contexts, may lead to improved outcomes for participants in the study (Bassey, 1999). Third, the aim of the case study is to give voice to the participants and to represent the case authentically. In doing so this case study gives voice to teachers' experience of responding to the imperatives of the New Evangelisation.

#### 4.4 Participants

The participants in this research are teachers in three Catholic secondary schools in an Australian metropolitan city. A Catholic Education Office administers the Catholic schools in this diocese across three geographical regions. The geographical areas are used for ease of efficient administration. Schools and their population in one region are similar to schools in other regions. The participants in this research were teachers employed in one region in this system of Catholic schools. There is no specific reason why one particular region was chosen for the research except for the need to identify a bounded system, appropriate in the adoption of case study methodology. Figure 4.1 shows the geographical area of this system of Australian Catholic schools.

**Figure 4.1**

*Map Showing Regional Distribution of Catholic Schools Administered by the Catholic Education Office in 2014.*



The two stages of data gathering using a variety of participants are illustrated in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2***Participants in the Study*

Stage	Data gathering method	Participants	Total (N=)
Stage 1	Semi-structured interviews	St. Mary's College St. Francis College St. John's College	N = 9 groups
Stage 2	Documentary Analysis	St. Mary's College St. Francis College St. John's College	N = 3 (school sites)

Stages one and two of the data gathering involved participants in the largest three schools of the region in terms of student population. The practicality in terms of time and access was also a factor in their selection. The largest three schools were chosen for the multi-site case study as this would allow for a manageable documentary analysis, and a more purposeful selection of teacher participants from within a relatively large and diverse individual regional context (Yin, 2009). The selection of three schools (see Appendix C) for this first stage would also ensure that a balance could be achieved between data saturation and a selection of cases not too large so that a deep, case-oriented analysis could be achieved (Leech, 2005). The schools are: St Mary's College; St Francis College; and St John's College (see Appendix D).

The first stage of the data gathering was semi-structured interviews of teachers and school leaders (see Appendix E) in three schools. Teacher's perspectives on the research questions were canvassed in a series of focus group interviews with teachers (see Appendix I). Groups of teachers in each school were then invited to participate in semi-structured interviews (see Appendices G & H). School leaders' perspectives were also ascertained through a semi-structured group or individual interview. The leaders' semi-structured group invites participation from those with specific responsibility for leading New Evangelisation initiatives including the Principal, Assistant Principal, Leaders of Religious Education/Mission, and Youth Ministers. Participants could nominate other teachers whose experience or role may have been of relevance to the study. This snowballing process is a legitimate strategy (Creswell, 2008).



A documentary analysis also occurred concurrently with the semi-structured group interviews in each of the largest three schools. These documents are those relevant to each Catholic school's implementation of the New Evangelisation.

#### **4.5 Data Gathering Strategies**

The research employs the following data gathering strategies:

- Semi-structured interviews
- Documentary analysis

Table 4.3 outlines the various stages and sequence of the data gathering strategies:

**Table 4.3**

*Data Gathering Sequence*

Strategy	Stage	Description and sequential information
Semi-structured interviews	1	Semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted with participants in the largest three schools of the region
Documentary analysis		Documents were collected from the largest three schools in the region and analysis occurred

##### **4.5.1 Semi-structured interviews.**

This stage of the data gathering comprised semi-structured focus group interviews. Semi-structured interviews are face-to-face or "guided conversations rather than structured queries" (Yin, 2009, p. 106) between the researcher and purposively selected participants. Semi-structured interviews create a non-threatening atmosphere conducive to discussion which more formal interviews do not (O'Donoghue, 2007). The Interview questions schedule (see Appendix I) was developed based on the specific research questions generated in the Literature review and following the documentary analysis (see Appendix J).

##### **4.5.2 Documentary analysis.**

The second stage of the data gathering was an analysis of documents or key artefacts (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). These documents were gathered from the largest three schools in the region. They include policy and implementation documents

originating from the Catholic Education Office and applied to the local school context. Likewise, documents concerning the implementation of New Evangelisation provided by each school (see Appendix J) were analysed. The documents to be analysed provided data on the understanding and implementation of the New Evangelisation in these three schools.

#### **4.6 Analysis of Data**

Data analysis means making sense of the data (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002; Merriam, 1998; Tellis, 1997b). Analysis involves synthesising the data into categories and then reinterpreting the data to generate a narrative (Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000).

Constant Comparative Analysis is the data analysis process used. Constant Comparative Analysis is a process in which each item of data is checked or compared with other data in the generation of categories (Pope et al., 2000, p. 114). The data analysis occurs concurrently with data collection (Creswell, 2008). The phases of this analysis are both simultaneous and iterative in that the analysis process “circle(s) back and forth between collection and analysis” (Creswell, 2008, p. 245) so that data are reduced and categorised. Thus the themes and patterns emerge from the data, rather than being imposed before data collection (Anfara et al., 2002; Patton, 1990). Through this process, similarities and differences were identified, and themes emerged as the data codes were clustered. The process of data analysis is illustrated in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2**

*Analysis of Data*

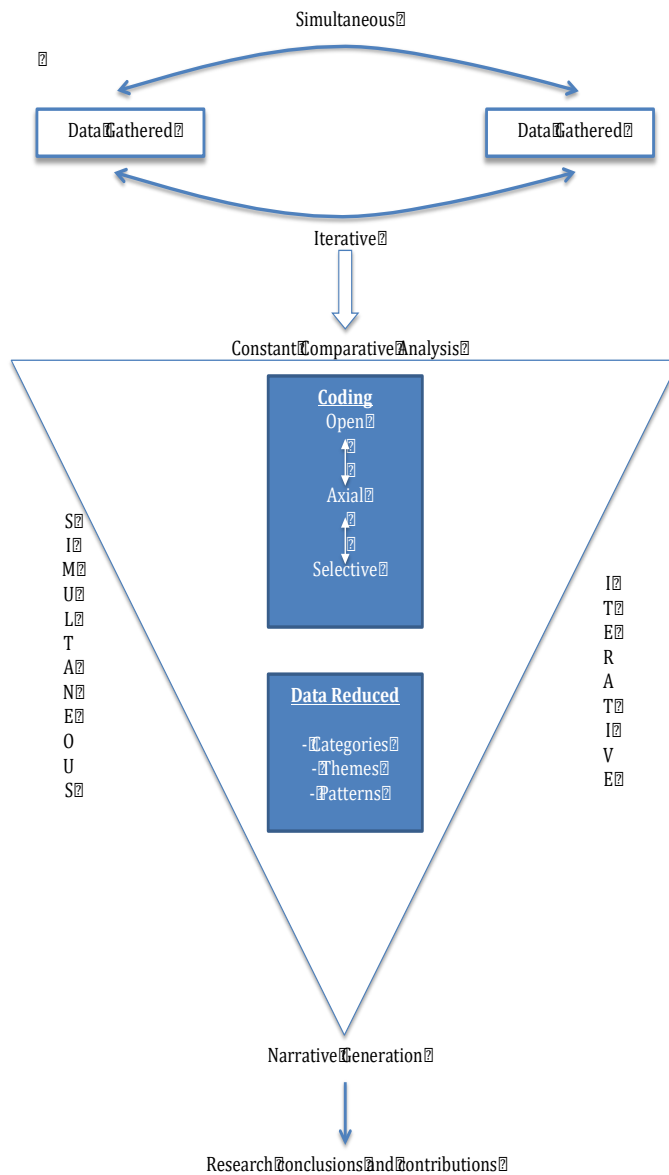


Figure 4.2. Diagrammatic representation of the process of data analysis used.

**4.6.1 Stages of data analysis.**

There were three major stages in the data analysis, the first stage of which is the gathering, transcribing and organisation of the data. The *NVivo 9* (*NVivo 9 Advanced*, 2010; *NVivo 9 Basics*, 2010) software package was used in the data analysis process (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2011).

The second stage of the data analysis was the coding of the data. A code is a name or label that the researcher gives a piece of text that contains an idea or a piece of information (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). The coding of the data enabled the creation of themes, patterns and relationships from the data gathered (Kelliher, 2005, p. 128). Coding reduces the complexity of the data by ordering, indexing and categorising the data to establish broad areas for further exploration (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, & Coleman, 2000). A three-part process of data analysis involving open, axial and selective coding was adopted for this research (O'Donoghue, 2007).

#### **4.6.2 Open coding.**

Open coding is the process in which the data are coded into broad categories and indexed (Creswell, 2008; Patton, 1990). An open code is attached to a piece of text to describe and categorise that text (Merriam, 1998). The names of these codes arose from the research literature, from the language of participants or created by the researcher. The codes were then grouped into categories and labelled. Using the constant comparative approach for saturation, the data were continually categorised and compared (Creswell, 2013).

#### **4.6.3 Axial coding.**

Axial coding is the process whereby a group of open codes are categorised around a label or axis (Creswell, 2013). These codes would concern the same concept and may be mapped against the research questions (Anfara, et al., 2002). Axial coding reduces the number of codes and demonstrates the connections between various concepts identified in open coding (O'Donoghue, 2007). The constant comparative approach was employed at this stage as the categories were constantly verified against incoming data.

#### **4.6.4 Selective coding.**

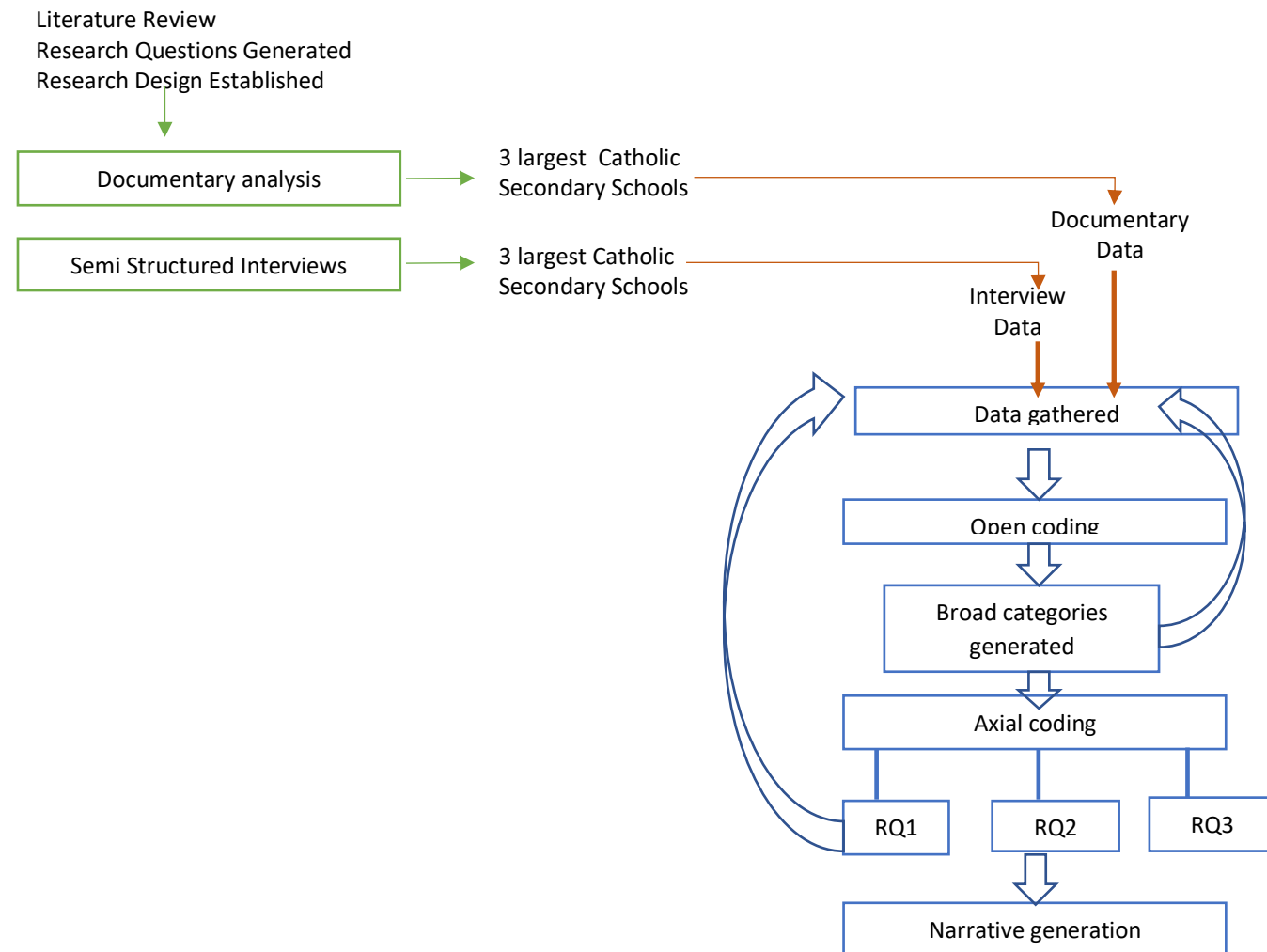
Selective coding is the data analysis process of highlighting the links between categories identified at earlier stages of the coding (Creswell, 2008). The purpose of selective coding is to integrate the categories to form the basis of a theory (O'Donoghue, 2007). It is this process of selective coding that formed the basis of the narrative. The intention in this iterative process was to saturate the categories with the data gathered through an ongoing process of refinement (Dye, et al., 2000).

The final stage of the data analysis was the narrative generation. The researcher used the categories, themes and patterns that emerged to produce a narrative (Phelps, 2005). This narrative responded to the research questions in the form of a story that captured what emerged from the data gathering and analysis (Anfara, et al., 2002). The purpose of this narrative generation was not simply to reduce the data to a manageable entity, but so that the voices of the participants can be captured in a style that responded directly to the research questions posed for this study (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001; Lichtman, 2006).

The overall data analysis process is illustrated in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3**

*Gathering and Analysis of the Data*



## **4.7 Trustworthiness**

The research process requires that the data collected and the processes used to collect and analyse the data are trustworthy (Degenhardt & Duignan, 2010).

Trustworthiness concerns how the researcher demonstrates the validity of their research (Creswell, 2008). Credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability are four strategies that assisted in demonstrating the trustworthiness of the research (Anfara et al., 2002).

### **4.7.1 Credibility.**

Credibility refers to the reader's confidence in the data and its interpretation. Various methods are employed in the research design to ensure the credibility of this research. The multi-site design and triangulation of data are two major methods employed in the proposed design to ensure credibility.

A multi-site case study is designed to strengthen the credibility of the research through data collection across more than one site and among varied participants across these sites (Yin, 2009). Rather than relying on one site for data, the multi-site case study proposed allowed for data collection from multiple sites. Capturing individual participant voice and pattern matching to create categories of responses from multiple respondents across multiple sites was inherent in the research design and increased the robustness of the findings (Tellis, 1997b, p. 3).

Triangulation is the use of multiple and different methods and sources in the research process to ensure corroboration of the data (Creswell, 2013). Triangulation is inherent in the research design of this case study as numerous participants on multiple sites were participants in the research. Further, varied methods of data collection including documentary analysis and interviews were employed in the research design to ensure corroboration of evidence and thus the credibility of the conclusions (Kelliher, 2005). The triangulation of both participants and of data gathering strategies ensured a holistic exploration of the situation and the generation of valid conclusions and reliable processes (Anfara et al., 2002, pp. 33–35).

### **4.7.2 Transferability.**

Consistent with the theory of qualitative research, the purpose of this study is to explore the experience of the participants in a given context (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The

thick description of that research was specific to a given context and thus the transferability of the research to other sites is the responsibility of the reader (Creswell, 2013). Further, as the participants were purposively selected, this may influence the transferability of the findings to any other site (Anfara et al., 2002).

#### **4.7.3 Dependability.**

Dependability is the extent to which both the researcher and the research presented can be relied upon for truthfulness. Two strategies were employed to ensure dependability. First, member checking was employed to ensure the truthfulness of the research (Mercer, 2007). Member checking involved participants validating or checking their responses, and also the researcher making available to participants a draft of the case study (Yin, 2009). Further, emergent findings of the research were made available to the participants before finalisation of any conclusions (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001). While this may in fact opened the way for participants wanting to change, expand upon or retract their original responses the researcher holds that the benefits this created in terms of the dependability of the research outweighs any concerns (Mercer, 2007). An auditable trail was then created for this research (O'Donoghue, 2007).

Second, this research was conducted within the system of schools in which the researcher held a leadership position of Principal. This therefore required consideration of aspects of the research design which address the issue of research as an insider (Edwards, 1999). Some respondents would be known to the researcher and it was anticipated that a “different degree of reciprocity [would] be achieved with each interview” (Mercer, 2007, p. 11). The voluntary nature of the research, member checking and the opportunity for follow-up interviews addressed some of the concerns that may have confronted the researcher as an insider in the system of schools and further ensured the trustworthiness of the research. Further, the transparency and scrutiny of the data-gathering and analysis processes by the researchers’ supervisors in collaboration with the researcher provide a further measure of impartiality and dependability.

#### **4.7.4 Confirmability.**

Confirmability ensures that the research is conducted in an objective manner. Confirmability was ensured through the availability of the data and access to it by participants, supervisors and colleagues. The use of member checking, the voluntary nature of the research, the reliance on both interview and documentary data combined

with regular meetings with the supervisor increased the trustworthiness and objectivity of the research (Hewitt-Taylor, 2001, p. 41).

#### **4.8 Ethical Issues**

Research of this nature requires ethical considerations and sensitivity at every stage of the research. Key to the ethical dimension of the research is respect for participants by ensuring a degree of self-determination in the voluntary nature of the research and adherence to a process of creating confidentiality (Measor & Sikes, 1992). The value of this case study is that it seeks to understand the views of individuals and the experience of school communities in this context while at the same time ensuring the participants are “protected from harm, real or perceived” (Degenhardt & Duignan, 2010, p. 62). Every means to ensure each participant and school responses were de-identified were employed through coding and these responses are stored securely in multiple locations.

Following ethical clearance from the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix A), written permission to participate was sought from the Catholic Education Office, Sydney and each school involved (see Appendix B). This permission was obtained following information briefings of relevant staff. The written consent of all participants was obtained prior to their involvement in the research and at each stage of the participant’s involvement. Copies are stored securely at multiple locations and will be made available as requested by relevant bodies.

#### **4.9 Limitations and Delimitations**

This research is limited by the nature of the responses of the respondents. The use of multiple methods of data collection sought to provide every opportunity for participants to engage comfortably in the research at times and in ways that ensured their personal integrity. Through the establishment of access to guidance and advice from professional peer support, ethical consideration being paramount for participants was ensured. Further, peer review with the Principals of the three schools included in the research occurred during the period of data gathering and analysis. This process sought to ensure that responses and scenarios that might arise and are unforeseen or those beyond the researcher’s control, would be dealt with. This process consisted of in-person meetings, emails, and telephone interactions with the three Principals during the data gathering stage to ensure clear and approved communication concerning the research with



voluntary participants occurred, and to respond to any concerns regarding the research raised by the participants. Moreover, the data gathering processes, and the presentation of data was scrutinised extensively with the researcher's supervisor and reviewed independently by the University during annual Work in Progress reviews. Finally, the researchers' peers were also provided with the opportunity to review and provide feedback on their school case study before the finalisation of the conclusions and recommendations.

Processes to protect participants and to ensure the reliability and truthfulness of the research have been outlined. The purposive selection of participants was deliberate to ensure that those involved could contribute effectively to the research in question. While this delimitation was deliberate, its purpose was to ensure that the research is effective and the voluntary nature of involvement ensured.

## Chapter Five

### Presentation of the New Understandings

#### 5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation. The purpose of this chapter is to present the *new understandings* generated from the data analysis of semi structured interviews, focus groups and documentary analysis. The term, new understandings, is adopted rather than the traditional term, findings, to indicate that the understandings generated are the researcher's understandings of the multiple participants' understandings generated from data analysis. This process is described appropriately as the double hermeneutic (Norreklit, 2006) and is consistent with the interpretive paradigm adopted for this research. Therefore, the new understandings that are synthesised in these case studies are generated through the researcher's robust engagement with participants' ideas and beliefs, rather than merely found. Consequently, the product is the researcher's synthesised defensible understandings generated from the multiple and at times, conflicting understandings of the participants.

The following specific research questions focus the conduct of the research:

1. How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?
2. How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?
3. How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

The data collection strategies included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and documentary evidence. Twenty-seven teachers and school leaders volunteered as participants. A total of 9 focus groups and 2 individual interviews were conducted in these case studies (see Appendix K). The characteristics of the participants in the three case studies are documented in Table 5.1.

**Table 5.1***Participants in the Study*

Characteristics of Participants	Case Study 1: St Mary's College	Case Study 2: St Francis College	Case Study :3 St John's College	Total
Number of Interviews	5	3	3	11
Male	7	3	3	13
Female	4	5	5	14
Years in school	0.5–25	0.5–26	4–10	-
Years of teaching experience	0.5–35	0.5–26	4–36	-
Principal	1 (Acting)	1	1	3
Assistant Principal	0	1	1 (Acting)	2
Religious Education Coordinator (REC)	0	1	1	2
Assistant REC	1	1	1	3

To maintain the anonymity of the cases and participants, pseudonyms and codes were adopted. The schools are identified using pseudonyms. Codes were used to classify participants as well as to protect anonymity. These codes indicate whether a participant engaged in a focus group (FG) or individual interview (I). Participants are then coded as either a teacher (T) or school leader (L). Leaders in this study are a Principal, Assistant Principal or Religious Education Coordinator. The dates of the semi-structured interview are also indicated. For example, FGT7, June 23, 2014 indicates that the data is from a participant in a focus group. The participant is the seventh teacher participant in the case study. This interview was conducted on June 23, 2014.

## **5.2 Case Study 1: St Mary's College**

### **5.2.1 Context.**

The permanent presence of Catholicism in Australia began with the arrival of the First Fleet in 1788. By the 1820s, the Catholic community had established at least three schools (O'Farrell, 1992). During the early decades of the colony, these schools were

conducted by lay Catholics and received limited financial support from the Colonial administrators. Beginning in the 1850s, the momentum for the provision of free, secular and compulsory education culminated in the removal of the Government's financial support of Catholic schools (Bessant, 1984). This decision became the catalyst for the Australian Catholic bishops' initiative to invite European religious congregations to staff Catholic schools in Australia (Dixon, 2015).

Reflecting the predominantly Irish background of most Catholic colonists, a large proportion of the religious congregations to establish communities in Australia originated from Ireland. The teachers who established St Mary's College were Brothers whose order was founded in Ireland in the early 1800s to teach the rural poor (see Appendix J, MDE 1). At the invitation of three Australian bishops, these Brothers arrived in Australia in 1883 and, a month later, began teaching in remote country schools in New South Wales. The illness and death of many Brothers, as well as conflicts with Bishops over their governance, resulted in their withdrawal from country schools (O'Farrell, 1992). Consistent with their mandate to educate the poor, the Brothers established schools in the burgeoning Catholic working-class suburbs of inner and western Sydney. Beginning in inner-city Redfern, by the mid-1950s, eight schools were conducted by these teaching Brothers, most of whom were Irish born (O'Farrell, 1992).

The post-World War Two migration boom witnessed the arrival of refugees and migrants from war-torn Europe. Many of these new arrivals settled in the remote suburbs of Western Sydney. Responding to the need to provide a Catholic education for boys from the local parishes, the Brothers established St Mary's as a Year 5–12 boys college in 1953. Beginning in a weatherboard cottage on 10 acres acquired by the Archdiocese, three Brothers, one Irishman and two Australians, founded St Mary's. The College served local families who were largely of Australian, Italian and Maltese extraction. While the Brothers retained the leadership of the College, they worked in collaboration with an increasing number of lay teachers.

Located in one of Sydney's major hubs for new arrivals, St Mary's has continued to respond to the emerging demographic and social changes of the local area. The arrival of refugees from Indochina following the Vietnam War, 1955–1975, and, in more recent times from the Middle East, as well as the growth of large migrant communities from South America and Eastern Europe in adjoining suburbs, have contributed to a school

demographic of 85% of students from non-English speaking backgrounds. The Brothers relinquished the College leadership in 2001. The principal is the second lay married school leader of St Mary's.

By the closing years of the 2010s, St Mary's \$14 million refurbished campus accommodates 1100 boys in Years 7–12. In addition, 92% of students have a language background other than English (LBOTE). On average, 80% of the Year 12 cohort gain University entry. The College staff comprises 76 full-time, 13 part-time teachers and 28 support staff, only one of whom is a Brother. Despite both the second language background and the relatively low socio-economic status of many of the families whose sons attend the College, St Mary's is ranked as one of the twenty outstanding academically performing Catholic systemic schools in Sydney. The following sections synthesise participants' responses to the three specific research questions.

### **5.2.2 Case study one: Specific research question one.**

The first specific research question that focuses the conduct of this research is:

How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?

Participants' responses to research question one are synthesised in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2**

*Case Study One: Research Question One. How do Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools Experience the Contemporary Expression of Catholicism?*

Codes	Emerging Themes	Synthesised Concepts
Schools are more Catholic than in the past Schools are authentic Schools are genuine Charisms stronger Community Belonging to school Many opportunities at school Care Integrated framework Gentle Inclusive Invitational	Openness to Catholicism Integration Hospitality Schools more overtly Catholic	The positive experience of Catholicism at St Mary's
Church is failing Secularism impacting Families don't practise No belonging to Church No connection to parish Parish is like a desert Lack of depth Relevant Limited participation	Declining religious practice in Catholic family life Declining parish affiliation Increasing identification with the Catholic school Disillusionment with the Catholic Church.	The relationship of Catholics with the institutional Church
Depends on leadership Good role models Leadership issue Fewer Religious Pope Francis Teachers in the minority Teachers do a lot Teachers practise little Teaching	Increased expectations of teachers Fewer religious Re-expression of the Charism Small numbers of committed staff Declining Church responsibility	Increasing responsibility of teachers for the expression of contemporary Catholicism

*Note.* Analysis of participants' responses to research question one identified codes, emerging themes and synthesised concepts.

Three concepts generated from the data analysis processes address research question one. These are:

1. The positive experience of Catholicism at St Mary's
2. The relationship of Catholics with the institutional Church
3. Increasing responsibility of teachers for the expression of contemporary Catholicism

#### ***5.2.2.1 The positive experience of Catholicism at St Mary's.***

Located in the western suburbs of Sydney, St Mary's is situated in an area that has accommodated many migrants from diverse regions of the world for generations. The religiously diverse and multicultural nature of this area is reflected in the student and staff population of the College. One in three people in the immediate suburbs surrounding St. Mary's identify as Roman Catholic compared to over one in four in the greater city region. The participants work in a well-established Catholic secondary school that accommodates staff and students from many cultural backgrounds but whose families identify predominantly as Roman Catholic.

In this Catholic context, participants' experience is that contemporary expressions of Catholicism are a part of daily life at St Mary's. Catholic belief and practice underpin the mission of the College and this milieu reflects the religious traditions of staff and students:

Well, the best features are that I think the kids are switched on. They come to the school with a sense of some religious background and some values. So that makes it easier for teachers to interact with the students. Not all the students are switched on, but I think most of them are. They do have these values, whether it's Church-based or whether it's just values that are being passed on from generation to generation...and that makes it easier. So, the kids are friendlier, more tolerant. I think they've got a greater sense of justice and fairness. (IT10, June 4, 2014)

The congruency between the traditional religious family backgrounds of staff and students and the Catholic vitality of St Mary's generates a unique context in contemporary Australian Catholicism. Such a phenomenon rarely exists in other Catholic schools, where parents and their children no longer practise Catholicism. The shared values of the home and traditional Catholicism are expressed clearly by one teacher's comment: "I think people come to the school 'being on the same page'. The students and

the parents [share similar beliefs and values] ..., so that makes our job easier” (IT10, June 4, 2014).

In this context of relative openness to faith, the participants’ experiences of Catholicism are positive. They work in an explicitly Catholic school community and educate in a context where Catholicism underpins the daily experience of those at St. Mary’s. This milieu enables contemporary Catholicism to be expressed in a uniquely homogenous Catholic community. Daily prayer, Catholic practices and rituals, Religious Education, and the presence of priests and religious contribute to the tangible Catholic culture. There is an “undercurrent of understanding” (FGT5, June 4, 2014) that permeates the life of the school. This provides a framework in which contemporary expressions of Catholicism are relevant and prioritised:

It's the framework...I think is the greatest thing about teaching in a Catholic school on a day-to-day basis is that you've always got that framework to refer back to and rely on. You know that you're not on your own as a teacher with your own rules. Like it's not just like you're standing there saying to the kids, ‘This is what we do’. It's actually [saying], ‘This is what our [Catholic] tradition is. This is what our values are’....All the people, you know in the executive and all your other colleagues are on the same page. (FGT5, June 4, 2014)

The spirit of inclusion and sense of belonging experienced at St Mary’s are catalytic to this framework. The school is non-selective and responds to the needs of families from diverse socioeconomic and language backgrounds. This diversity is reflected also in the range of ages, experience and religious backgrounds of staff. Regardless of this diversity, all students are included in the contemporary Catholic life of the College:

[St Mary’s is] a rewarding place to teach [in]. The community in this Catholic school is extremely welcoming [and] hospitable. There's a primacy about caring for kids and there's a strong commitment to the Church. [This] comes from varied people in the staff.... [The school is] a true community where everyone looks after each other [and is] concerned about the wellbeing and the nature of each other, but also with the focus on learning. It's...a learning community first and foremost. The Catholic community sits side by side with that. (IL1, June 11, 2014)



Further, how the Catholic faith is communicated and celebrated at the school is “gentle and genuine” (FGT4, June 4, 2014). This experience of Catholicism is an expression of the charism of the founding Brothers. Consequently, there is an enthusiastic identification and commitment to the charism of the Congregation of Brothers. Participants understand that an attribute of this charism is “meeting people where they are” (FGT5, June 4, 2014). This charism dictum offers a particularly appropriate contemporary relevance:

I think there is a place for the aims of what the New Evangelisation does, which in my understanding of it aims to meet people where they are at on their faith journey and make it relevant to them and acknowledge where they are at. (FGT1, June 4, 2014)

Finally, participants experience St. Mary’s as more Catholic compared to the experiences they had when they were students at high school. In the past, Catholic schools had vowed Sisters, Brothers and priests on staff and they often held leadership responsibilities. Catholicism was an explicitly focussed experience reinforced by Religious Education and liturgical participation. In contrast, the experience of Catholicism at St Mary’s is relatively understated yet equally as authentic:

I reflected...on my schooling [recently]. I realised that a lot of my religious experience at high school was very de-identified from being Catholic...I think there was a little bit of a hesitancy to be openly Catholic about it. It was all very kind of Christian and there was lots of emphasis [*sic*]on social justice and that kind of stuff. But it was never kind of proclaiming to be Catholic if that makes sense, or as clearly as I notice here...I've noticed since working in the Catholic system that...people are happy to talk about the tradition, to talk about Rome, to talk about the Pope. I think that's partly because now we've got Francis. But it's not just this kind of like soft-edged, fuzzy idea of being a good person [and] being a Christian. There is actually a strong sense of a Catholic identity and a Catholic tradition which is openly proclaimed. (FGT1, June 4, 2014)

The positive experience of contemporary Catholicism within St. Mary’s is to be contrasted, however, with the expressions of Catholicism experienced in parishes.

### *5.2.2.2 The relationship of Catholics with the institutional Church.*

Despite the positive culture of contemporary Catholicism at St Mary's, participants experience staff and students at St Mary's as having a tenuous relationship with the institutional Church. Several influences illustrate the nature of this relationship.

First, not all participants attest to the importance of Sunday Mass attendance for students and staff. Mass attendance is the traditional touchstone for being an authentic Catholic. Regular Sunday attenders are described as practising Catholics or churched Catholics (Hermelink, 2011). Teachers at St Mary's estimate their students' Mass participation rates vary from between 5% and 25%. While there may be some cultural exceptions to this at St Mary's, where Filipino and Vietnamese Catholic students at the College tend to be practising Catholics, participants indicate that most other Catholic students attend Mass sporadically:

We've got a higher percentage of kids...practising regular worship on weekends than what the church life survey would [indicate]. I'd say that we're probably closer to 25 per cent, and I think a lot of that's because of the high migrant mix out here. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

Participants indicate that few staff are practising Catholics. A school leader reflects on the possible influence of this phenomenon:

A lot of our teachers are not churched....When I look ahead for 20 or 30 years...when these... teachers, and they're great teachers, are in the positions of leadership in schools, [I ask myself] 'What's the religious leadership going to look like?' So, what role have they got to play? They've got an enormous role. I don't know if a lot of our young staff are regular churchgoers. What does regular mean? I don't mean necessarily every Sunday, but I mean frequently. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

Second, the tenuous relationship of Catholics with the institutional Church is illustrated in their limited relationship with any Catholic parish. Together with the family and the local Catholic school, the suburban Catholic parish was once a primary conduit between the Catholics laity and the institutional Church. Australian Catholics were affiliated with the institutional Church through parish-based Sunday worship, reception of the sacraments, parish social and sporting clubs, and children's enrolment in the parish school. This relationship no longer exists (Dixon, 2015). Nevertheless, some of the

participants who are active parishioners report that their parish is attempting to re-engage with the local unchurched Catholics. These participants indicate that the supposed “enthusiasm of the teachers [at St Mary’s] is not matched with the enthusiasm of either your parish priest or your youth group” (FGT8, June 4, 2014). Whatever the reason, many of the Catholic laity at St Mary’s are disengaged from their Church.

In contrast, participants relate that their colleagues and students identify enthusiastically as being a St Mary’s staff member or student. Ironically, while teachers and students may not be practising Catholics, many participate actively in worship ceremonies organised at St Mary’s. Indeed, some of the practising Catholic staff members believe the school’s provisions of positive worship experiences are opportunities for evangelisation. Such an initiative has its critics.

I have an issue with the school becoming the new place of evangelisation because people aren't going to the parish. Read the latest encyclical. If the parishes are warm places of greeting instead of berating, or instead of a desert, then maybe the kids will see that. Because they come to our school, we encourage ‘participational’ liturgy; but the place of evangelisation is the home and it's the parish because as soon as kids leave here, they're gone. I mean...we cannot encourage something that they cannot graft onto. If the tree is dead that they go to then it's a bit unfair on us to water the garden and then put them in the middle of a desert. (FGT6, June 4, 2014)

Further, for many Catholics, the tenuous relationship with the institutional Church has been exacerbated by the influence of the Australian Commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The public disclosure of incidents of abuse and failures in the institutional Church’s responses to abuse have resulted in disillusionment by Catholics with the Catholic Church. This has led to a decline in belief and practice by Catholics (Wright, Swain, & McPhillips, 2017). Participants report that students generally have distanced themselves from the parish and institutional Catholicism, but not from St Mary’s. For adults, this demarcation is not as pronounced:

Even now, in challenging times, being a Catholic right now given the scandal and everything with the child sexual abuse and horrendous stuff, which we have to confront as a faith community...it's not a real issue for [students]. I think it's more

an issue for adults. But for students, because they don't have contact as often as they did at the Sunday church and at the Sunday mass, I believe their belonging to the school is totally separate from their understanding of what's happening at the moment in the Church...I would suggest the Church has a major problem with Sunday attendance. But what the church doesn't have a problem with is a sense of belonging in their Catholic schools. (FGT3, June 4, 2014)

Therefore, participants, while indicating a distancing from the institutional Church in the community, demonstrate a committed sense of belonging to St Mary's. As one member of the College leadership team suggests, staff and students may identify as Catholics but have minimal association with the institutional Church beyond the school:

...We have a lot of staff [whose only] experience with the Catholic Church is what they get at school [and] obviously [this is so for] a majority of our students as well....They might have their 'licence in their wallet' as I say, like their Sacraments of Initiation....Sometimes basically that's even an entrée to Catholic schooling for some of them. But a lot of them...don't see the necessity to be engaged with the Church whilst they consider themselves still part of the Church. So [they are] baptised, they're 'card carrying Catholics' and it's much the same with our teachers. So...one of the biggest challenges [is] that sense of Church and being part of the broader Church and having our full community understanding [that is] in the linkages we create. I worry more about that [challenge]...when I think [ahead] probably two-or-three-decade's time. I really do. I don't know what it's going to look like then. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

### ***5.2.2.3 Increasing responsibility of teachers for the expression of contemporary Catholicism.***

Participants experience that teachers at St Mary's are increasingly responsible for expressing contemporary Catholicism. These increased expectations have developed in the existing context in which fewer Catholics practise their faith. Families anticipate that the Catholic school offers an experience of contemporary Catholicism that they are unable to offer:

There are a lot of challenges out there [in the broader social context] so it makes it quite difficult for families. I think families try to give a lot of responsibility to the

school because they don't have the opportunity to give the kids what they want in this particular environment. (IT10, June 4, 2014)

Consequently, this expectation means, in reality, that teachers at the College are considered conduits for Catholicism. Participants indicate that teachers lead, organise, encourage and participate in sacramental opportunities, liturgies, prayers, and social justice initiatives. One young teacher clarifies the reliance on teachers to facilitate these opportunities:

I would say that our students respond to what we provide for them as a Catholic school because of what we do. You know, if we were not as committed to showing the Catholic values, in giving the students the opportunity to be part of Masses and have prayer in the chapel and go on retreats and have all of these things around us...the students...probably wouldn't really have much of a witness to it themselves. They probably would not see it as something that's important...But I think because we are so involved in what we do and because we try to bring that Catholic faith and dimension into...everything that we do and we provide the students with so much witness to it [Catholic faith], they respond to that because of the effort that we make. (FGT3, June 4, 2014)

Some participants indicate that the lay leadership in faith scenario has developed because of the declining presence of religious Brothers at the College. Previously, the expression of Catholicism at the College resided in their leadership, example and vision. Reflecting on his own positive experience of the influence of the Brothers, one long-serving teacher explained the changes that have occurred:

There were more religious around and I think with the religious being there [at the College, we] had a greater sense of mission and purpose. They lived their faith. They lived in the community and I think that was more obvious. Nowadays, it's not as obvious. There are pockets of good things now, but not everyone's on the same page. I think before there was a greater sense of faith and the Brothers took more responsibility. There was more of a hierarchy there, and that filtered down. Like when I was here at the school, early on there were quite a lot of Brothers.... There were almost five brothers. But I think that sort of gives a school more direction. Now, it's sort of left to the lay people. I think the Principal's doing a good job and they do as good a job as they can. The REC is doing a really good

job. But I don't think it's as united. I don't think it's as strong as people would expect. (IT10, June 4, 2014)

This is not an opinion shared by all participants. Others perceive that the change to lay leadership of Catholic life and practice has had a different but nevertheless very positive influence on the school. In particular, the re-expression of the charism of the Founding Brothers by teachers and school leaders is believed to be an honouring of the Brothers' previous and continued contributions to the College. This has occurred because lay women and men have integrated those founding ideals into the contemporary expression of Catholic life at St Mary's. One former student and now senior leader at St Mary's illustrated the pivotal role of lay teachers in this transition:

Having been a student at that time [1970s] ...[we] started to see the Brothers being replaced by the laity. So, the legacy I think of the Orders is that we have, as a laity...claimed the charisms and the work of the Orders in establishing schools. It is something that we need to claim, continually acclaim and celebrate at the school. I think schools...even when I started teaching...were very Catholic. They were not very piously holy places, but they were unapologetically Catholic. I think there's a greater effort now to actually celebrate the heritage [particularly in] schools...that came from Orders.... We really want to hold on to that and keep that alive for the kids. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

Nonetheless, participants are responsible for the provision of experiences of Catholicism at St Mary's. This has a threefold influence on participants. First, participants experience an increased workload as more evangelisation initiatives are added into the school life:

Opportunities arise because of the structure and expectation of schools. It's innate [and] includes pastoral care, retreats, the curriculum, even preparation [to receive the] Sacraments. It is integrated and relevant, but things are being added on at a fast rate. (FGT5, June 4, 2014)

Second, participants indicate that a relatively small group of teachers are involved in the provision of these experiences at the College. This group of teachers comprises those who, because of their personal faith commitment, choose to involve themselves or those whose roles (e.g., Youth Ministers) dictate their involvement. Participants believe teaching and extra-curricular responsibilities are explanations for their colleagues' limited

engagement. In contrast, teachers' Catholicity and commitment to mission are motivation to be involved in evangelisation:

... it falls on the same people not because they're expected to do it, [but] because they volunteer to do it. Which is fantastic. But when it's always the same six teachers every time, it's hard on them. And the kids can pick up on that as well. (FGT5, June 4, 2014)

Third, participants indicate that in providing contemporary expressions of Catholicism to young people, more is being required of teachers and Catholic schools than other agencies of the Church. Further, participants perceive that other agencies of the Church are abdicating their role in evangelising young people:

But I think the Church has to be real [*sic*] careful about advocating what are we doing as individual teachers for [the] mission. I mean we are trying to live the values of the Church...I really think that Church has got to be careful about saying, 'Okay teachers do more, more, more!' We [teachers] build a bond where these students belong. We look after their mental health. We model and live the Faith. Then once they go outside, I think it's the Church that needs to pick up their weight. (FGT2, June 4, 2014)

While de facto, the Catholic school is assuming the responsibility for nurturing children's faith development and practice, the leadership of this experience is assumed by teachers, many of whom, despite their commitment to the College are not practising Catholics.

### **5.2.3 Case study one: Specific research question two.**

The second specific research question in this study is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools understand the New Evangelisation?

The analysis of the data indicate that participants have multiple understandings of what constitutes a definition of the New Evangelisation, as shown in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3***Case Study One: How do Teachers Understand the New Evangelisation?*

Codes	Emerging Themes	Synthesised Concepts
Not Catholic Proselytising Uncertain	New term for Catholics Negative connotations	A confusing concept
Struggle Not new Dislike the term	There is not a new Evangelisation New term for Catholics	Reject the concept
Back to church Back to basics As renewed Passing faith on Family disconnection Connected Start at school - Anchor in church Connecting teachers Engaging non-practising Catholics Church expectations	Connection Non-practising Catholics	Connecting non-practising Catholics with the Church
Meet people where they are Relevance Action Faith formation More than Church Not integrated Role of the school	Relevance Faith formation Teacher's role Action	Personal Christian commitment

*Note.* Table illustrates the synthesised concepts generated through the analysis of the data, codes and themes.

The analysis of these understandings generates the following categorisation of how teachers understand the concept of the New Evangelisation:



The converters: These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as contemporary Catholicism's renewed approach to conversion;

The rejecters: These teachers reject the notion of a *New Evangelisation*. They believe that evangelisation has been fundamental to the Christian community since the time of Jesus. For them, there is nothing new in Evangelisation.

The connectors: These teachers believe the New Evangelisation is focusing primarily on reconnecting non-practising Catholics with the Church.

The witnesses: These are personally committed Christians. They try to live authentic lives, which honour honesty, caring, service, respect and commitment to those who are in need. The New Evangelisation for them is their Christian witness.

These four categories illustrate teachers' understandings of the New Evangelisation at St Mary's.

#### ***5.2.3.1 The converters.***

The first category of teachers is the converters. For them, the New Evangelisation has, primarily, a proselytising agenda, reflecting a Christianity uncommon among Roman Catholics. They believe that the New Evangelisation aims to convert religiously uninvolved students to practising Catholics by promoting the development of a personal relationship with Jesus. This style of evangelisation is characterised by a dogmatic proclamation of the Gospel that aims to convert students. Their approach is reminiscent of traditionalist American Protestant charismatic preachers (Boguslawski & Martin, 2008). They understand that the New Evangelisation is in "spreading the word" (FGT8, June 4, 2014) and these evangelisers adopt an approach that is premised on proclaiming the Christian message in order to convert. This group of teachers believe:

...Protestants seem to do [evangelisation] better than we [Catholics] do. They do it and it's almost a part of their charism; but it's [also] part of our charism too. So, I think what [the Catholic Church] has tried to do now [is] to say, 'It's not [just] for the Protestants to be working on this. It's actually for us to be doing this'.  
(IT10, June 4, 2014)

#### ***5.2.3.2 The rejecters.***

Some teachers struggle with the concept of a New Evangelisation. They believe that evangelisation has been fundamental to the Christian community since the time of

Jesus. It is difficult for them to conceive that evangelisation is in any way new. They adopt a dogmatic approach towards evangelisation, since according to them, there is no new evangelisation:

I've got a big issue with [the New Evangelisation]. I don't think there is any New Evangelisation. I don't think it's any different from when the Holy Spirit first came upon the Apostles. Our role is to be models of Jesus Christ, who obviously is the role model of the Christian faith. I think that doing this is how you spread the teachings of Christ. I've been to conferences and I've seen things and I've read articles about the New Evangelisation and appealing to young people. But it's always been about appealing to young people. Yeah, so I struggle with the term New Evangelisation. I don't believe it's new in any sense of the word. The Holy Spirit or our own faith is challenging us to be role models to young people, so that they will then adopt [a Christian] lifestyle. (FGT3, June 4, 2014)

They interpret the New Evangelisation to reflect their own faith beliefs:

I've got to be honest and say I don't like the term, evangelisation. I think people often call it 'the E word' and it scares people.... Well, evangelisation can be looked at in two ways. It depends for me which side of the fence you sit on. It can be looked upon as judgmental and trying to get people into a particular tradition, drawing them in out of fear of what's next. Or it can be looked upon as from this side of the fence as a positive thing. So, there's two ways to look at it, I think. The New Evangelisation to me is about justice and it's about the world. It's about equity and justice and the environment and all sorts of things that weren't traditionally part of evangelisation. It's not just about [encouraging people to] believe in Christ, [seek] forgiveness for sins, and [then] enjoying eternity. It's more about responsibilities, custodianship of the planet, and responsibilities to other human beings. It's more about modelling a Christ-centred life, if you want to call it that. It is the way you treat other people and the planet as compared to what it was in the past say when I was growing up. (FG T4, June 4, 2014)

This practical understanding of the New Evangelisation is different from the converters. These teachers cite a variety of evangelisation experiences that have been used in Catholic schools to implement the traditional mission of Catholicism. These are included in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4***Case Study One: Participant-Identified Evangelisation Experiences*

Evangelisation experience	
1.	Teaching Religious Education
2.	Catholic social teaching
3.	Mass
4.	Lunchtime prayers
5.	Rosary
6.	First Friday Mass
7.	Retreats
8.	College Prayer
9.	Class prayer
10.	Voluntary prayer
11.	Whole-school Mass
12.	Wednesday Adoration
13.	Post-Trial HSC retreat (Voluntary)
14.	Sacraments (Reconciliation)
15.	Liturgical calendar
16.	Back-to-Parish Masses
17.	Project Compassion
18.	Winter appeal
19.	Christmas hampers
20.	Red Shield appeal
21.	Vinnie’s Van
22.	SPARK – junior Vinnie’s
23.	Aged care home visits
24.	Charism-based school leaders’ gatherings
25.	Prefect-led charity drives
26.	Student ministry–Eucharistic ministers
27.	Chapel Committee
28.	Hosanna Festival–Easter
29.	World Youth Day
30.	Pre-and-Post World Youth Day formation

*Note.* The data in this table were drawn from semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence (see Appendix J, MDE 1–4).

### ***5.2.3.3 The connectors.***

Some participants understand the New Evangelisation to be an initiative aiming primarily to connect non-practising Catholics with the Church. The aim is to encourage baptised Catholics to recommence weekly Mass attendance and reception of sacraments.

This understanding of the New Evangelisation emerged from the “growing secularity and indifference” (Bevans, 2014, p. 5) to the Church among Christian people in developed nations such as Australia. While the term New Evangelisation originated with Pope Paul VI (1975), it was Pope John Paul II who used it in the way in which these teachers understand it. He explained to Latin American bishops that what was needed was not a re-evangelisation but an evangelisation, which is “new in its ardour, methods and expression” (John Paul II, 1983).

The connectors understand the New Evangelisation in these terms. The audience for this New Evangelisation is the increasing number of their colleagues and students “who are Catholic in name only” (IL1, June 4, 2014). These have been baptised and may have received the Sacraments but ‘they are lapsed Catholics...they're not practising... [and they have] no sense of engagement with the parish [or] the wider church’ (IL1, June 4, 2014). They understand that the purpose of the New Evangelisation is:

...not just to provide that belonging to the school, but also to anchor that to the universal faith [of the Church] and to be giving them the language...and the knowledge for them to go beyond [the Catholic school] and be a part of the universal church. (FGT5, June 4, 2014)

In order to achieve such goals, specific strategies have been employed (see Table 5.4). For these teachers, the New Evangelisation:

...means using the technologies and what's available out there to get the word [of God] out there. It's not only just using books or talking. It's using high tech [means], using the mass media, using World Youth Day, using all these things that are available. But people might say well ‘that's not really Catholic’ or ‘that's too trendy or too modern’. But it's actually what people are connected to. So, they [the evangelisers] have to use the means that are out there. (IT10, June 4, 2014)

#### **5.2.3.4 *The witnesses.***

Some participants interpret the New Evangelisation as an expression of their personal Christian commitment. They understand that they evangelise primarily through the witness of their Christian lives. They experience that “the Holy Spirit or our own faith is continually challenging us to be role models to young people so that they will then adopt that [Christian] type of lifestyle” (FGT3, June 4, 2014). These teachers believe the New Evangelisation concerns their authentic living of the Christian faith. Their agenda

entertains neither rejecting nor connecting anyone to anything. They seek to live according to their understanding of the Gospel and, by their influence, attract others to Catholicism. For them, the New Evangelisation:

...means trying to deal with all those things in a student's life and helping them find some sort of formation with their faith as a part of that. [Evangelisation is about] helping kids to not so much come back to the Church, but [consists in] finding a place in their life for [the] Faith. (FGT8, June 4, 2014)

These witnesses attest to a personal commitment to Jesus and a spirituality informed by the values of the Gospel. In contrast, they identify many students and staff as lacking this experience. They understand the New Evangelisation as how they respond to “the spiritually starved” (FGT9, June 4, 2014) at the College. Reflecting the charism of the founding Congregation, they evangelise by “meeting people where they are at” (FGT9, June 4, 2014).

There are two premises underpinning Witness Evangelisation. First, these teachers witness primarily to their living the Gospel within their Catholic tradition. It is this dynamic that reflects their evangelising involvement in a Catholic school (see Table 5.4):

I would say that our students respond to what we provide for them as a Catholic school [and] because of what we do. You know if we were not as committed to showing the Catholic values, in giving the students the opportunity to be part of Masses, have prayer in the chapel, go on retreats and have all of these things around us they probably wouldn't really have much of a witness to it themselves. They probably would not see it as something that's important. But I think because **we** are so involved in what we do and because we try to bring that Catholic faith and dimension into everything that we do [that]...the students...respond...because of the effort that we make. Our students respond to [evangelisation experiences] because we provide it [*sic*] for them. (FGT3, June 4, 2014)

Second, not all teachers at St Mary's share this understanding of the New Evangelisation. While some teachers witness their faith, others do not. This is not surprising because some teachers are not Catholics. Others, while Catholic, refrain from active engagement in evangelisation activities. Still others reject a personal responsibility in the New Evangelisation agenda. These teachers believe their responsibility is to teach

their discipline professionally. In contrast, the witnesses are personally committed to Catholicism and adopt an approach to evangelisation grounded in personal authenticity. They neither abdicate their responsibility in presenting the Good News, nor are they concerned with conversion. For these teachers, witnessing, as evangelisation, is an expression of their identity and they understand it is incumbent on them to evangelise others or not by living authentically.

To summarise, an analysis of the data concludes there is a lack of consensus concerning the New Evangelisation's definition, purpose and expression. This lack of a shared understanding influences its implementation. Specific Research Question Three addresses this issue.

#### **5.2.4 Case study one: Specific research question three.**

The third specific research question structuring the conduct of this study is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools respond to the New Evangelisation? Data generated responding to Specific Research Question Three were from interviews and the analysis of documents. The data have been analysed using codes that generated themes and synthesised concepts. This process is demonstrated in Table 5.5.

**Table 5.5***Case Study One: Research Question Three–Emerging Themes*

Codes	Emerging themes	Concepts
Liturgies Prayer Liturgical calendar Foundation Retreats Foundation Parishes Teaching Impact Challenges Time-consuming Long-term Post-school Student motivation Church Family Parishes	Sacraments Prayer Teaching Impact	Foundations
Opportunities World Youth Day Not individualised Healthy experiences Healthy parishes Making faith real Being explicit Relevance Actions Student-led Personalised faith Lack of structure Haphazard structure Disconnected Isolated Falls to the few Workload Demands commitment	Opportunities Lack of structure Healthy Relevant	Opportunities
Work-style Care Pastoral Relationships Challenge for staff	Relationships Challenge	Relationships

Codes	Emerging themes	Concepts
Role-modelling Teaching Example Credibility Staff witness Teaching Role models Healthy staff witness Healthy pressure Teacher formation	Role models Witness Obstacles	Role-Modelling

A synthesis of these emerging themes suggests four concepts that encapsulate how teachers respond to the New Evangelisation at St Mary's:

1. Foundations
2. Opportunities
3. Relationships
4. Witness

The lack of consensus concerning how the concept of the New Evangelisation is defined (see Section 5.2.3) influences how it may be implemented. The reality is that teachers respond to the New Evangelisation according to how they understand it. Table 5.6 illustrates this relationship.

**Table 5.6**

*Case Study One: Teachers' Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation*

Understandings	Emerging Themes	Responses
Rejecters Converters Connectors Witnesses	Sacraments Prayer Teaching Impact	Foundations
Converters Connectors Witnesses	Opportunities Healthy Relevant Lack of Structures	Opportunities
Connectors Witnesses	Relationships Challenges	Relationships
Witnesses	Role Models Witnesses Obstacles	Witness



*Note.* Table illustrates the relationship of teachers' understandings of and responses to the New Evangelisation.

While not mutually exclusive, the categorisations in Table 5.6 serve to illuminate the relationship between teachers' understandings of the New Evangelisation and their response to it. The presentation of New Understandings that follow are structured to illustrate this correlation.

#### ***5.2.4.1 Foundations.***

All teachers at St Mary's respond in varying degrees to the New Evangelisation through the provision of Catholic foundations. These foundations include the provision of Sacraments, opportunities for prayer, and teaching that integrates Catholic values. These are foundational because through them the fundamental beliefs and practices of Catholicism are communicated to students. All teachers are required to be involved in their provision to students and it is incumbent upon all teachers to support these activities. These foundations are inherent in the structures of the College, such as learning and teaching programs, the College Calendar and daily school routines which form the basis upon which other evangelisation initiatives at St Mary's occur. The provision of these foundations at St Mary's are threefold.

First, participants indicate that they respond to the New Evangelisation by providing the opportunity for the reception of the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. A "solid liturgical calendar" (IL1, June 4, 2014) operates at the College, and the priests of the local parishes provide opportunities for staff, students and the broader community to participate in Eucharist and Reconciliation as shown in Table 5.7.

**Table 5.7***Case Study One: St Mary's Liturgical Program*

Title	Format
Commissioning and recommissioning of staff	Eucharist
Ash Wednesday	Eucharist
Annual College Inauguration Liturgy	Eucharist
First Friday lunchtime - College Chapel	Eucharist
St Patrick's day	Eucharist
Prefect Investiture	Eucharist
End of Semester One	Eucharist
Father's Day	Eucharist
Mother's Day	Eucharist
Feast of St Mary McKillop	Eucharist
Feast of the Assumption	Eucharist
Year 12 Graduation	Eucharist
Pastoral Class at Parish	Eucharist: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday (roster)
Stations of the Cross - Holy Week	College Liturgy
Class Captains and Student Representative Council Liturgy	College Liturgy
Monday morning staff prayer	Staff weekly prayer (obligatory)
Monday lunchtime - College Chapel	Weekly voluntary prayer
Rosary	May and October Lunchtimes
Sacrament of Reconciliation	Intermittent
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament	Wednesday Lunchtime (voluntary)
Back to Parish Sunday Eucharist	Annual in each feeder parish

*Note.* This table illustrates the scope of the Sacramental program at St. Mary's College. The data were drawn from semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence (see Appendix J, MDE 1–4).

Second, teachers respond to the New Evangelisation by ensuring that students can pray while at school. There is an expectation that all classes are provided with opportunities for prayer. Prayer is experienced as “a very visible and important part of [the school] community” (IL1, June 4, 2014). Whole-school liturgies and traditional Catholic prayer forms such as the Rosary and Stations of the Cross are prayed at appropriate times in the Catholic Church's liturgical year. Year-based retreat programs supplement these opportunities for prayer. These compulsory retreats provide students with time for prayer, reflection and the reception of the Sacraments.

Finally, teachers also respond to the New Evangelisation through the organisation of their teaching. The beliefs and practices of the Catholic Church are integrated into all learning and teaching programs at St Mary's. This integration is mandated across the College and participants understand teaching as a means of evangelisation: “[the] New Evangelisation is of course about teaching. [It is] not just about going to Mass, [and seeking] forgiveness of sins, [and] all sorts of indoctrinating in the church” (FGT4, June 4, 2014).

Regardless of their understanding of the New Evangelisation, all teachers participate in the provision of these Catholic foundations which participants understand to be a response to the New Evangelisation. Further, it is through these foundations that the expectations and priorities of the College are reinforced when communicated to students. Consequently, by involving all staff in this communication, teachers indicate that the Catholic identity of the College is enhanced, and students come to “understand that’s who we are” (IL1, June 4, 2014). Catholic foundations such as regular prayer:

Certainly, gives them [students] a sense of purpose. It's part of the [school's] identity....So, I think in terms of the impact on the kids, [prayer] gives them a clear understanding of what is expected of them in being a part of this community. (FGT4, June 4, 2014)

Teachers report that student's engagement with these foundational practices and emphases is positive. Rather than rejecting Catholic beliefs and practices, participants experience that students “rise to the expectations” of Catholic faith and practice (FGT4, June 4, 2014) and that “the New Evangelisation...[is] creating healthy young men” (FGT4, June 4, 2014). However, participants express uncertainty about the long-term impact of these foundational experiences. Speaking about his experience of being present for a student-initiated twilight retreat following Year 12 examinations, a school leader reflects:

[The retreat] was just a great experience for the kids, and we talked...that night [with staff]. I remember walking around with the kids and [thinking]... 'Would Christ be doing some of these things?' The impact of the New Evangelisation on the kids, [is that] ...it gives them a really healthy foundation for their life. I have no doubts...that whilst we keep doing the good work in Catholic schools, that our kids when they graduate.... [or] when they get married and settle down...will still

come back to the Church. And they'll see it's important to say, 'Well okay, I want the kid christened, [to] have the sacraments, [and then] on we go to [a] Catholic school and that sort of stuff. It's just that I don't think...they...see that strong link to get back into the parish or into the life of the church [and] be part of the broad church. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

Having sought to expose students to Catholic faith and practice through these foundations, participants acknowledge that beyond the school, the influence of these initiatives is difficult to measure. Whilst they hope that these foundations may endure, they are largely uncertain because participants "think as much as what we do here [at the College] is really important, there's stuff in families which we can't address....All of that stuff is kind of out of our hands". (FGT5, June 4, 2014)

Participants also experience the institutional Church as an impediment to the foundational work that occurs at St. Mary's. This is because the experiences of parish life are not commensurate with the experience of Catholicism at the College. Participants indicate that many students, already disengaged from the institutional Church through a lack of family practice, are further alienated by the experience of contemporary Catholicism in their local parish:

Trying to get these kids to go to Mass, like outside of what's offered at school, I think that's the challenge...That bit of the New Evangelisation [trying to connect students with their parishes]...[is where] we've got a difficult role. Trying to connect them back with their parish outside school, to have that enthusiasm transfer from what we try [to] provide [for] them here [is a challenge]...We see they're enthusiastic here when they come to retreat, when they go on your camps....But it's transferring that enthusiasm and maybe that drive...outside. It's...a joint role [with parents]...I often have that discussion, even in my religion class. I make them feel comfortable enough to be able to answer that question honestly. [I ask] 'Who goes to mass?' and say, 'Boys don't be embarrassed!' I just want to know roughly who I'm speaking to in the class, because you need to know who you're teaching. The numbers are low, so I try [to] model it. I try [to] get myself there, and I go to the local church because I can, and the kids see you there.... But what about the ones that don't go? What do you do with those? (FGT7, June 4, 2014) and,

...I think part of the blame has to fall with the parishes as well. So, I think...you haven't got that same sort of experience [as at St Mary's] on Sunday at the parish. That [what] you're getting here, the enthusiasm of the teachers here is not matched with the enthusiasm of either your parish priest or your youth group as well. So short of the school taking over the youth group at every parish...That's the big challenge. (FGT8, June 4, 2014)

Further, establishing the foundations of Catholic belief and practice is challenging for participants because the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has catalogued the prolonged extent of child sexual abuse by clergy, Religious and Catholic Church personnel. Not only this, but Catholic leadership appeared to ignore victims and focussed on the protection of offenders and, consequently, the credibility and authenticity of the Catholic Church is questioned in the public domain (Novello, 2015; Robinson, 2007). These teachers, however, indicate that while this may further alienate young people from the institutional Church, it does not necessarily influence their sense of belonging to the school (see Section 5.2.2).

Participants also indicate that in comparison to other agencies of the Catholic Church, and despite the contemporary context outlined, teachers at St Mary's are effective in establishing and promoting foundational Catholic belief and practice among young people:

But I think the church has to be really careful about advocating what are we doing as an individual teacher for [the] Mission....I really think that church has got to be careful about saying, 'Okay teachers do more, more, more.' We [teachers] build a bond where these students belong. We look after their mental health. We model and live the faith. Then once they go outside, I think it's the Church [that] needs to pick up their weight. That's my personal view....I think we're doing a good enough job here as teachers. Which is not to say that we should be complacent. We need to continue to work hard to do what we do to bring that faith dimension to our students. But I think we're doing a better job than a lot of other sectors that the students are exposed to. (FGT2, June 4, 2014)

However, the scope of teachers' involvement differs according to their role (e.g., The coordinator of Religious Education would lead the provision of the sacramental program, while others may only ensure student attendance on these occasions). Further,

while compulsory whole-school Sacramental celebrations (e.g., the St. Patrick’s Day Mass) require the involvement of all teachers, those who reject the concept of a New Evangelisation would be less likely to participate in voluntary or optional Sacramental occasions such as the provision of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

#### **5.2.4.2 Opportunities.**

Many teachers at St Mary’s engage with the New Evangelisation through the provision of evangelisation opportunities offered at the College. These evangelisation opportunities are available to all staff and students. They are additional to the foundational elements outlined in 5.2.4.1 and occur within and beyond the College. Within the College, these include fundraising for those in need, social justice outreach, and opportunities that arise as teachers support student initiatives such as the development by students of the annual College scriptural theme. Outside the College, these occasions include involvement in Catholic festivals, World Youth Day and student catechesis in local primary schools as shown in Table 5.8.

**Table 5.8**

*Case Study One: Evangelisation Opportunities at St Mary’s College*

Evangelisation Opportunities at St Mary’s College
World Youth Day
Project Compassion activities
Social justice outreach
Festivals
Youth Ministry programs
Catholic Education Office Programs
Student-led prayer experiences
Student Representative Council–College annual theme development
Student Representative Council–College House Charities
Student catechists
College social justice group
Promotion of parish opportunities
Fundraising
Nursing home visits
St Vincent de Paul Night Patrol

*Note.* The table presents a synthesis of these optional evangelisation opportunities at St Mary’ College. The data were drawn from semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence (see Appendix J, MDE 1–4).

Many of these opportunities are a feature of both the Archdiocesan and the Catholic Education Office's responses to the New Evangelisation (see Section 3.4.2). Opportunities such as involvement in World Youth Day pilgrimages are adopted by schools and the Archdiocese as a means of responding to the New Evangelisation and have become characteristic of Catholic schools across the Archdiocese. However, students and teachers are not obligated to be involved in these evangelisation opportunities.

Participants indicate that they are able to provide evangelisation opportunities at the College because the students are generally respectful and open to involvement in faith-based opportunities. This is evidenced in student-initiated evangelisation opportunities. "Young people [at St Mary's] are being given the opportunity and the responsibility" (FGT3, June 4, 2014) to present contemporary expressions of Catholicism to the College community:

[Student initiatives] give the students the ability to express their own views and where they are at. It's actually passing the flame on. Rather than saying: 'Here we are with the Catholic faith!' [this approach] says, [What do you know? What do you have? What can you offer? How can you build this community?] So, it's giving the kids that responsibility of carrying on the faith I suppose. (FGT1, June4, 2014)

How teachers respond to the New Evangelisation through these opportunities also varies. Some teachers, such as the College Youth Minister and the Religious Education Coordinator are expected to be involved in these evangelisation opportunities because of their role in the school. For others, involvement in these activities is optional. Those that do volunteer to be involved believe that these evangelisation opportunities provide students with "a really healthy foundation for their life" (IL1, June4, 2014) because they offer students the opportunity to integrate Christian faith with life:

I think we do it well in terms of the way we try to merge faith with life in the opportunities that we provide...That's why maybe that they try and branch out to the charity work and things like that, because that's what makes the faith real. (FGT7, June 4, 2014)

Such responses to the New Evangelisation are typical of those teachers who understand their role in the New Evangelisation as "converters, connectors or witnesses"

(see Section 5.2.3). Those who lack enthusiasm for New Evangelisation are unlikely to be involved in these evangelisation opportunities. They accept that their responsibility is to teach their subjects professionally and provide a duty of care for their students.

Consequently, they do not engage with the New Evangelisation. Moreover, while they may claim competing time priorities as reasons for their disengagement with New Evangelisation, many are simply disinterested in the New Evangelisation and its objectives. While they are committed teachers, they are not personally engaged in the religious mission of Catholic education. Consequently, the agenda of the New Evangelisation at St Mary's is shared by few teachers and ignored by many, as illustrated in the following statements:

My experience is that [evangelisation] needs to be more of a team effort...Besides the current company, there was [*sic*] very few [who get involved]. There was [*sic*] a small group of people you could rely upon if you want to implement an initiative at the school. There's [*sic*] a lot of cynical teachers and stuff that you have to compete with...because most initiatives are going to be outside of school hours. It's hard to get that commitment. So, I found that one of my challenges in the role [of Youth Minister] is getting that support from a wide variety of people. Then...if you run ten things in here you can't expect the same people to come ten times; (FGT8, June 4, 2014) and

But that was the problem wasn't it? Every time that something came up, it was the same volunteers, and sometimes it ended up just being the same old people. And how do you get the new teachers? I think that's our challenge to, you know, like how do we change them as well and prepare them? (FGT9, June 4, 2014)

There are four implications that emerge in this context. First, these evangelisation opportunities occur because of the generosity and commitment of a small group of teachers:

I would say that our students respond to what we provide for them as a Catholic school [and] because of what we do. You know if we were not as committed to showing the Catholic values, in giving the students the opportunity to be part of Masses, have prayer in the chapel, go on retreats and have all of these things around us they probably wouldn't really have much of a witness to it themselves. They probably would not see it as something that's important. But I think because



we are so involved in what we do and because we try to bring that Catholic faith and dimension into everything that we do [that]...the students...respond...because of the effort that we make. Our students respond to [Evangelisation experiences] because we provide it for them. (FGT3, June 4, 2014)

Second, competing demands on teachers' time constrain evangelisation opportunities. Participants experience the imperative of the New Evangelisation as an additional demand in their already cluttered school life:

But the problem is this, or the challenge I should say, is that we've got a lot of other things coming at us as well. You've got the national curriculum and the technology. Everybody at this school has moved towards using technology. So, you've got this challenge of taking care of each other [and] taking care of the kids. Part of this evangelisation is about how we do it altogether, and respecting the limitations of people I guess, because you have to be careful [with] levels of anxiety, things like that as well. To me, I'm glad that they've created some of these new positions [Youth Minsters] because at least that allows for some of these people to take up these opportunities. (FGT7, June 4, 2014)

Consequently, relatively few teachers at the College initiate or are involved actively in optional evangelisation activities. The reality is that it is the same small group of teachers who commit themselves consistently to the New Evangelisation.

Third, as many teachers do not see themselves as evangelisers and because evangelisation initiatives rely on a small group of staff, the New Evangelisation program at the College is relatively ad hoc and lacks designated leadership. Participants identify a need for more a more structured approach to the implementation of the New Evangelisation at the College:

We have these kids doing lots of good things around the place, but they need guidance and structure to work around. We have so many kids who would...go to the nursing home and then [because of] the experience they have, they want to do more...We could take a Vinnies Van out here once a week, and we'd have the kids. We don't have the staff; we'd have the kids that would do it...We'd just like a real program [of student service] that is an expectation [for all students to be involved in on] being enrolled. (FGT4, June 4, 2014)

Finally, the problem of minimal teacher involvement, lack of structure and leadership of the New Evangelisation is not confined to St Mary's. These issues exist in other Archdiocesan systemic schools. Consequently, schools are isolated in their efforts to evangelise others:

Schools are like islands when it comes to social justice and New Evangelisation. Like islands. This school does a bit of that. I mean [they] will do a bit of this. [St Mary's will] do a bit of that. (FGT4, June 4, 2014)

#### **5.2.4.3 Relationships.**

Some teachers at St Mary's respond to the New Evangelisation through their relationships with others in the College community. Such responses to the New Evangelisation are typical of those teachers who understand their role in the New Evangelisation as "connectors or witnesses" (see Section 5.2.3). These teachers indicate that the New Evangelisation is integrated into their daily interactions with colleagues, students, families and the broader community.

These teachers report that it is through the quality of their relationships and care of others, including the care of their colleagues, that they respond to their faith and by extension, the New Evangelisation. This is exemplified in the approach of a senior teacher at the College:

I would say my role is [to] model...the life of Christ. So basically, to develop positive relationships, to be there, to be open. A lot of people say teaching is a vocation. I believe it is. My number one aim...is... [to ensure] the health and wellbeing of the staff because...I need to manage the structure of the day. [And so, it is through] the living of the values that students can then say, 'Well, I wouldn't mind being like this person because he lives like this.' And those values obviously are the ones that reflect that of Jesus. (FGT2, June 4, 2014)

Not all teachers respond to the New Evangelisation through their relationships. Those who do sometimes experience the actions and attitude of others within the school to be at odds with their own. As a result, their faith compels them to challenge their colleagues to be more Christian in their relationships:

But I mean we do have some staff that need to be challenged and say, 'Look, it's about justice'...That's partly one of [the College Executive's functions which

is]...to make sure that people are on the same page...[and to ensure] our approach is a just one, a Christ-like one. (FGT6, June 4, 2014)

#### **5.2.4.4 Witness.**

A relatively small group of teachers at St Mary's are personally committed to the New Evangelisation. They respond by doing much at the College and by being Christian witnesses or role models. Consequently, they respond to the New Evangelisation through the witness of their lives. This understanding that witness and teaching are integral to the implementation of the New Evangelisation is reflective of the Church's understanding of the nature of effective contemporary evangelisation: "Modern man [*sic*] listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he [*sic*] does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses" (Paul VI, 1975, No. 41). Three themes further illuminate this concept.

First, these participants respond to the New Evangelisation by modelling Christian values and a Christian lifestyle to others. This role-modelling encompasses a willingness to share their personal faith by exemplifying Christian beliefs and practices:

Role-modelling is number one...Last week we had a Vinnies Van go out with a few teachers [as] we've got a lot of the younger staff here doing that sort of stuff. We had our winter sleep out. We're going to do another one this year where we've got teachers who come along. If they go and sleep outside, that role-modelling is exactly what kids thrive off [*sic*]. I think it's the number one thing. (FG T4, June 4, 2014)

Second, despite the personal commitment of some participants to the New Evangelisation, they indicate that there is not a consistent understanding of teachers' roles in the New Evangelisation. They suggest that most teachers at St. Mary's do not share their commitment to implementing the New Evangelisation. There are several reasons for this, namely: that there are some teachers who are not Catholics; others, who are Catholic teachers, do not understand the Catholic faith and thus need ongoing formation; and others who do not conceive of themselves as responsible for the evangelisation of others. Consequently, they identify a need for the ongoing formation of teachers at the College:

I think it [staff formation] is challenging because faith formation in adults...is more challenging than in youth. Just because maybe we're set in our ways, or we've had experiences that might colour how we view life and so forth, [and]

maybe you get the cynicism. I don't know. But I also think it has to do with the pressures of the job...these days as well. So, some people might be connected with their faith, but they might be in a stage of their life where they just can't commit to that. And there's so much going on curriculum-wise and pedagogy-wise and all this [so that we have our] fingers in every pie. But you just don't have the time to devote yourself to [evangelisation] as well as much as you want to. So, I think that that is a challenge too. But I agree, I see it [the New Evangelisation] as...something that needs to be embodied in Catholic schools, and that doesn't mean that you have to go around to every staff member and say, 'You're not Catholic, get out'. (FGT6, June 4, 2014)

The confusion over the role of teachers in the New Evangelisation is evident in participants' reticence to promote the connection of students to parishes actively. Despite the direction of the New Evangelisation to do so, some teachers do not believe the implementation of the New Evangelisation is their responsibility nor do they have the desire to engage young people with their local parish (see Section 5.2.2.2.; FG2T6, June 4, 2014).

Finally, teachers' confusion over their role is exacerbated by the institutional Church's contrary understanding of the role of Catholic educators in the New Evangelisation:

I had a conversation recently with a Bishop...who said to me, 'What are you doing as a teacher in one of our schools to promote vocations?' He kind of like caught me off guard. I thought, 'Oh!' he said, 'You're in an all-boys school. You've got all these young men. What are you personally doing to try and bring about more vocations?' I was quite taken aback by that because I thought actually, I don't know. I don't know what you do. How do you address that challenge? (FGT1, June 4, 2014)

### **5.3 Case Study 2: St Francis College**

#### **5.3.1 Context.**

The Australian Catholic community traces its origins to eighteenth century Ireland. Penal laws imposed in Ireland by the British Government attacked Irish culture, education and religion. Several Irish Catholic women and men confronted poverty and

ignorance by establishing works of charity to alleviate this poverty, as well as schools to educate the young people. These groups, inspired by the vision and mission of their religious founders, eventually received Papal authorisation as Roman Catholic congregations of Religious Brothers and Sisters. These congregations followed the Irish diaspora to the United States as well as to British colonies in Australia, Canada, New Zealand and Africa (Bielenberg, 2014). At the invitation of individual Bishops, Irish congregations established Catholic schools in colonial Australia to address the educational needs of the Catholic community (Dixon, 1996; Dixon, Hughes & CRA, 2005).

St Francis College traces its origin to this Irish context. The first group of Irish Brothers arrived in Sydney in 1843, responding to Bishop John Bede Polding's invitation. They repatriated themselves to Ireland in 1847 when they perceived that Polding interfered with their internal governance (Keenan, 1979). The Brothers returned to Australia in 1868, establishing schools, firstly in Melbourne and from there, throughout Australia (Finn, 2013; Luttrell, 2003). Irish Religious Sisters, such as the Sisters of Mercy, also established schools in all parts of Australia (Dixon, Hughes, & CRA, 2005; Luttrell, 2012).

By 1901, the need for Catholic schools in urban centres led religious congregations to establish primary schools in the developing outer suburbs of Sydney. St Francis was one such school. In 1924, the Sisters of Mercy founded the first Catholic primary school in this suburb where St Francis College is now located. The Presentation Sisters replaced them in 1950. By 1953, the primary school expanded to accommodate a secondary department for girls. The Christian Brothers also established a boys' school in 1956 that also expanded to cater for secondary boy's education.

The New South Wales Government's sponsorship of the Wyndham Scheme (1962) became the catalyst for smaller Catholic secondary schools to amalgamate into regional colleges (Hughes, 2001). The amalgamation of many schools founded by various religious orders to form one College is not uncommon in the Australian context (Gill, 2004). Consequently, St Francis became a regional senior school. Moreover, in 1975, because of innovative curriculum development and increased enrolments, co-educational education for St Francis' senior students (Years 11 and 12) commenced.

By 1987, St Francis became the first amalgamated Year 7–12 College in the Sydney Archdiocese. With a new crest and motto inspired by a senior student, St Francis became the common name for the parish, primary and secondary school. St Francis became a Year 7–12 coeducational Catholic systemic school in 1992, serving five local parishes and prioritising the enrolment of children from Catholic families from four feeder primary schools (Hilton, 1998; Hughes, 1995). St. Francis now identifies as a dual charism Catholic school where the charisms of the Presentation Sisters and the Christian Brothers inform the contemporary Catholic identity of the College.

Located in the densely populated suburbs of southern Sydney, St Francis attracts families from a predominantly Anglo-Celtic origin. The region has a small proportion of people born overseas and from non-English speaking backgrounds. Thirty-three per cent of the population in the region are Roman Catholics.

In 2014, St Francis enrolled over 1200 students in Years 7–12. The College enjoys an exceptionally high average daily attendance rate of 94%. In addition, 26% of students have a language background other than English (LBOTE). Ninety-one per cent of Year 10 students complete Year 12. The College has a staff of 90 teachers—65 full-time and 25 part-time—and 29 non-teaching staff. One per cent of the students identify as Indigenous.

The following sections synthesise participants' responses to the three specific research questions which focus the conduct of the study.

### **5.3.2 Case study two: Research question one.**

The first specific research question that focuses the conduct of this research is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism? Participants' responses to Research Question One are synthesised in Table 5.9.

**Table 5.9***Case Study Two: Teachers' Experiences of Contemporary Catholicism*

Research Question One: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?		
Codes	Emerging Themes	Synthesised Concepts
Cultural Catholics Minimal practice Brokenness Challenging Teachers are alienated	Minimal practice beyond the school Offering relevant religious experiences Minimal teacher affiliation to Church Credibility of the Catholic Church	Cultural Catholics
Charism Connected to Church Return to tradition Social justice Through the school Attempting to connect Teachers connected Church is important More opportunities More global Not traditional Spiritual not religious More personal commitment Inclusive	Multiple opportunities Traditional Catholic experiences The school is the primary experience of contemporary Catholicism Charism is problematic	Connecting to the contemporary Catholic Church

Two concepts were generated from data analysis processes. These are:

- a. The increasing prevalence of *cultural Catholics*; and
- b. Connecting to the contemporary Catholic Church

### **5.3.2.1 Cultural Catholics.**

Participants identify an increasing number of cultural Catholics (Masci, 2015) in their classes. Cultural Catholics understand themselves to be Catholics by heritage because they have been raised as Catholic (Masci, 2015). However, these Catholics accept few traditional Catholic beliefs and adhere to minimal traditional Catholic practice,

but are involved in social justice and charitable activities, values they learnt from Catholic schools. Secularisation, pluralism and the increasing privatisation of religious belief and practice (Casson, 2018, p. 58; Rossiter, 2013, p. 15; see Section 2.7) and the lack of credibility in Catholicism explain the increasing numbers of Australian cultural Catholics (Fuller, 2001). At St Francis, many students and staff are cultural Catholics. This reality has a twofold influence on participants' experiences of contemporary Catholicism.

First, participants believe that Catholic practices, undertaken by staff and students who are cultural Catholics, are confined to those offered at school. A contributing reason for this phenomenon concerns the school's socio-economic status. The school is situated in a relatively affluent section of the Archdiocese (Stevenson, Dunn, Possamai, & Piracha, 2010). Participants have "a sense [that] there are much more affluent families" (FGL2, June 11, 2014) than in other parts of the Archdiocese. They perceive that the relative affluence of many in the local area influences religious practice. Some teachers believe that "the spirit is fed by different things when you've got more resources" (FGL2, June 11, 2014) and that this affluence precludes religious practice or affiliation especially among the cultural Catholics:

I think that obviously there are challenges in terms of so many cultural Catholics now...I think also the increasing secularisation of society creates a bit of an obstacle at times [to religious practice with] sports on Sundays and part-time jobs and all those sorts of things. And so, there's a challenge, sometimes, to sell it to the kids. (FGT15, June 11, 2014)

Consequently, the primary experience of contemporary Catholicism for many in the school is confined to that offered at the College:

...Our students can be quite insular in their experience with the Catholic Church. They have it [an experience of contemporary Catholicism] from school but outside of school it's probably not as active. So, we support it [Catholic practice] really well [within the College]...[However], it's very insular and we offer plenty of opportunity, but its then [encouraging families] as well to do it [practise their faith] there [outside of school]. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

Second, teachers believe that the large numbers of cultural Catholic students are the catalyst for staff to offer selective traditional approaches to Catholicism. Ironically, while many of these cultural Catholic students may have rejected religion, they seem to



embrace spirituality (Fuller, 2001; Hamberg, 2009; Rymarz, 2010b; Tacey, 2003). Further, even though students rarely attend Mass in their parish, they are eager to participate in regional youth gatherings, which they believe are more relevant to them:

One of the most interesting things I've heard at this school with church worship for the students here is that they don't go to their local parish. They all will congregate at [one parish] because [it] has a great youth Mass on Sunday nights at 6:00. It's the music that's played and it's a gathering for them. It's an opportunity for them to be with like-minded youth. And so, the kids from [other parishes] all go to [that parish]. It's amazing how they do that. The connection is more like a geographical connection and that's the place of worship because that's where they put it on. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

Expressions of contemporary Catholicism at the College have adapted also to address the needs of the cultural Catholic staff who are relatively older in comparison to staff members in other systemic schools. As well, there are comparatively more non-Catholic staff members at St Francis compared to other Catholic schools (FGL2, 11/4/16). So, it is appropriate to offer ecumenical experiences of Catholicism to this group. Further, many members from this constituency engage actively in initiatives focussed on social justice and charity:

I think because [our teachers are] experienced and a lot older, their own faith journeys are perhaps a bit more colourful. I sense there's a frustration with Church. Maybe that it's a more grass roots desire for more grass roots faith than traditional faith. We've got staff members who are really interested in refugees and that seems to be becoming the flavour of this year for our kids as well. [They] will use briefing time to speak about things, but you wouldn't call them traditionalists...One of the things for the staff here [is that] there's a higher percentage of staff at this school...than any school I've been at, that are non-Catholic. They're Christian, but I think what actually happens [is that]...a lot of the expressions of faith are based in Christianity. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

This phenomenon presents challenges because, increasingly, these teachers are responsible for teaching contemporary Catholicism to students:

... [Students] don't have as many experiences [of contemporary Catholicism]. They're much more sceptical. They're much more cultural Catholics. So, we

[teachers] are the face of the Church much more than what it's traditionally been previously....But, that makes it a lot more rewarding as well. (FGL2 and L3, June 11, 2014)

Further, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse has had an especially deleterious influence on the credibility of the Catholic Church. The influence of the ARCIRCSA at the College has been twofold. First, an incident of historical child sexual abuse at St Francis was the reason for some staff to dismiss the Church as a credible authority. Second, and not surprisingly, they rarely refer to the Church as an arbiter for belief and practice:

[Catholicism is] a very hard message at times...it's heightened at times when the media's got a real focus on a negative aspect of the Church. Then, too it feels at times [that] even to speak [about] anything that's connected with [the] Church and ...people's understanding of what Church is...is hard...[Catholicism] has become an even harder story to sell because in the forefront of people's minds are things like the Royal Commission and abuse claims and it keeps bubbling away. There's even a history from this school....This school was in the media and how things have been handled in the past. People see that as [the] Church...to try [to] connect what...Church is [really] about, as opposed to individuals that have not honoured what the real meaning of Church is [a] challenge for us....Sometimes really it's a challenge which is at times, with some staff...almost...insurmountable. They've got it set in their heads. [There are] senior staff saying, "What's happened is just wrong" and "I could never forgive that person." It's a real challenge to actually then speak about forgiveness. I think the challenge is going to be for all schools when the Royal Commission does finalise...[to explain] what's happened. I don't think we can [have] our heads in the sand and think that they're not speaking about it in their own homes. [The challenge is] how do we actually get a message across to the students about...what [is the] real Church [and] what the real message of being a Catholic is? That's a real challenge. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)

Predictably, some school leaders at the College are challenged by parents concerning this problem:

It's very tough. I had a parent once [when] I was dealing with the son....He got quite agitated and he said, "I know what happened at this school. I came here, and

I know what those Brothers did.”...They've got scars. Then trying to speak about [it as] well [is difficult]. You can't empathise because you just can't [ignore it]...I don't know, you've got to honour the journey they've been on but then still [explain that] this school isn't what's happened in the past and this school is about respect and dignity. It's a hard message. It's a hard message for them to hear....It's not as difficult to say, but it's hard for them to hear. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)

Some participants respond to this criticism by distinguishing between the mission of Jesus and the Church as an agency for Mission. They believe that all too often, the focus of the Church has been on its own authority and aggrandisement and too little on the Gospel. When the Church is perceived to be authentic to the mission of Jesus, staff support it. The school leaders have “no doubt that Jesus and the Gospels are at the centre of this community” (FGL2, June 11, 2014) and that the school’s context, while challenging, is not an obstacle to their efforts to evangelise:

It’s the Jesus story [of] the brokenness and the being beaten and being whipped and whatever. And...the Resurrection, that's the rising. I think it's the same as our church. The humanness of our Church is terrible, absolutely terrible, and soul-destroying. But I think...if we truly believe that the Kingdom of God is on earth then we need to see that in the brokenness. Does that make any sense? So...what we're living through now is the signs of the times. This is the true Vatican II stuff. Not the stuff the staff talks about. What we're facing today is the challenge (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

### ***5.3.2.1 Connecting to the contemporary Catholic Church.***

Participants identify a range of opportunities for staff and students at St. Francis to connect with the contemporary Catholic Church. Ironically, participants experience these opportunities at the College despite the relatively large cultural Catholic population of the school community and the challenges to the credibility of the Catholic Church that exist currently because of evidence offered at the ARCIRCSA. Participants believe students and teachers are receptive to faith and spirituality despite these challenges:

There are challenges, but I think the students [are] actually...hungry for their faith. I think that's exactly what it is. They're part of the Catholic community and they want to experience what it means to be a Catholic as often as they can, and the challenge is for the school to do that. (FGL2, June 4, 2014)

Consequently, the College offers students a variety of experiences of faith and spirituality consonant with the Catholic tradition, as shown in Table 5.10.

**Table 5.10**

*Summary of School-based Connections to the Contemporary Catholic Church*

Summary of school-based connections to the contemporary Catholic Church—based on documentary evidence	
1.	Daily prayer
2.	Class Masses—Thursday morning
3.	Active presence of the priests of the feeder parishes
4.	Back to Parish Masses: Ash Wednesday, Feast of the Assumption
5.	Catechist program—Year 11
6.	Focus in regular newsletter and staff bulletin on Catholic faith and practice
7.	Family educators (Teachers employed to liaise with College families and create links to parishes for these families)
8.	Fundraising for Catholic charities—Saint Vincent de Paul; Caritas; Christmas Hampers; Lenten activities
9.	St Vincent de Paul Night patrol
10.	Voluntary work—Matthew Talbot Hostel; Nagle Hostel
11.	Participation in World Youth Day
12.	Revision of Religious Education curriculum
13.	Founders week
14.	Graduation Masses
15.	Retreat Program Years 7–12
16.	Year 11 Immersion—Timor Leste
17.	Religious Education test—Year 8
18.	Environmental Justice group
19.	Evangelisation days—Years 9 and 10

*Note.* The data in this table were drawn from semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence (see Appendix J, FDE 1–26).

These experiences contribute to students’ enthusiasm for both school life and spirituality:

The students are...engaged...they’re really enthusiastic learners. I think that they are spiritual...they have got high value systems. I think the community here supports that....Students, as always, are hungry and searching, particularly for the spiritual kind of connection and a spiritual dimension. (FGL2, June 4, 2014)

These initiatives appear to offer some relevancy in nurturing the spirituality of teachers and students. There are three possible reasons for this. First, these initiatives are both traditional and have a social justice basis. Traditional practices include weekly opportunities to participate at Mass and other sacraments. Indeed, the local Parish Priest is a regular presence in the school. Social justice opportunities also are valued particularly by staff and students. A senior leader at St. Francis, previously employed at St. Mary's (see Case Study One), offers the following comparison:

Look, I think the major difference here [at St Francis] is the...actual practice. It's not as traditional...compared to previous schools I've been at. [There] were things like Marian devotion...and rosaries [that] were more traditional practices when I was at [St Mary's] than what occurs here. But in saying that, the students here are very connected with the social justice initiatives. So, they really try, and...that's how they express their faith here. I suppose it's grounded in trying to tap into their own spirituality, but it's almost sort of secular in a way. But it is connected to the Church. We do things like Night Patrol and Matt Talbot and visiting the Nagle apartments here. These are things that...the senior students really take hold of and want to get involved in, but it's more about helping others...It's not so much based in Scripture [and] it's up to the teachers that lead it to try and connect it to their faith. But in saying that, there are things here, like the Thursday morning masses that take place. That was a student initiative. They approached the pastor and said they wanted to have the opportunity for regular worship and Eucharist. (FGL2/3, June 4, 2014)

So, while “there are pockets of students who are very traditional... in their faith” (FGL2/3, June 4, 2014), teachers at the College ensure that meaningful opportunities exist to engage staff and students whose practice is negligible.

Second, participants indicate that St Francis provides the primary experience of contemporary Catholicism for many staff and students. Most participants have only ever experienced schooling and employment within a Catholic community, and their primary experience of contemporary Catholicism is within this context. Further, participants believe St. Francis offers a more diverse and invitational experience of the Catholic Church than other contexts:

I think it's much more invitational now than perhaps what it was when I went to school...At those times it was much more an expectation [to attend Mass weekly]...I think now schools are for many families...Whereas, when I went to school and when I started teaching...people were more connected to their local parishes and came to school and schools were about school and parishes were about parishes. Now school is...about being the Church for families and connecting them. And I think...there's [sic] many more opportunities for families and for students [at the College] to engage in the Church in the contemporary world and to see the way that they can connect to that through social justice initiatives or immersion or those sorts of things. (FGT15, June 4, 2015)

Consequently, St Francis College is the primary experience of the Catholic Church for both teachers and students.

Finally, while some schools adopt the founding charism of the school as a means to enliven Catholic belief and practice (Cook & Simonds, 2011), this does not occur at St. Francis. Rather, participants employ contemporary spirituality and practices as well as traditional practices to engage students and staff with the Church. Three religious congregations were involved in the College's foundation. The subsequent amalgamation of the College in 1987 resulted in two charisms informing the new school culture. However, the influence of this dual-charism on contemporary Catholic faith and practice at St. Francis has been problematic:

The challenge for this community is that there are the two charisms.... I've found in other school communities I've been in...the connection with those charisms is always very...explicit and implicit in everything that they do. There's always a connection back to the charism. It's a challenge here because we have the dual charisms and trying to work out how we tap into the dual charism is just one of those challenges. (FGL3, June 4, 2014)

This problem concerns the ongoing tension concerning the supposed synthesising of these two charisms (FGL2, June 4, 2014). A participant explains this dilemma:

I suppose my experience of other school communities in terms of echoing the Church's year has been more explicit. Whereas, here it's almost like you've got to...be the Gospel in a clever way, and I do think that that's connected to culture, and I do think it's connected to age. Having worked in a school that [had] 100

years of tradition, it's easier to stand on the shoulders [of previous generations] .... When a school that's much younger [and has] a dual-charism, there's still a lot of feeling about the joining of the schools. Some staff members were here when the schools were separate [and they] were 'Mary Mackillop girls'. So, there's still that kind of tension there, which creates a lot of conversation and dialogue. (FGL2, June 4, 2014)

As a result, teachers at St Francis do not rely on the school's charism as strategy to engage with Catholic spirituality. Some teachers attempt to offer staff and students meaningful spiritual experiences because most are "not so much connected to...Catholic Church practice and Catholic Church instruction.... It's more about a Christian base" (FGL3, June 4, 2014). Consequently, the connection to the contemporary Catholic community at St. Francis is characterised by an innovative spectrum of opportunities (see Table 5.10) through which staff seek to "be the Gospel in a clever way" (FGL2, June 4, 2014).

### **5.3.3 Case study two: Specific research question two.**

The second specific research question in this study is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools understand the New Evangelisation? The teachers at St Francis have a unique context in which they express their understanding of the New Evangelisation. This is because St Francis is one of the few Catholic secondary systemic schools in the Archdiocese to publish a definition of evangelisation. It reads:

#### **Evangelisation**

You might ask yourself what is Evangelisation? Well, the simplest explanation is that Evangelisation is an invitation extended to young people to encounter a personal experience with Jesus Christ through the Church. It encourages [people of] all ages to live every day of their lives as witnesses; evangelising others and the culture in which they live. It provides opportunities and conversations that deepen young people's relationship with God, encouraging them to live as disciples and discover Christ's invitation to full sacramental relationship with Him. The Liturgy is to be considered the central place of evangelisation.

Evangelisation includes creating a space of warm hospitality in which God may speak to people. It is an invitation to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. All

evangelisation begins with the recognition of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit already in all young people and their experiences. Evangelisation enables young people to uncover and name the experience of a God already active and present in their lives and encourages them to evangelise others. Evangelisation ultimately draws people into full discipleship.

Young people are called to become the agents for the new evangelisation, working in collaboration with their local community, to reach out and witness to Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. Young People are to be encouraged and assisted to use many and varied creative means, always seeking to build a bridge between the ancient faith and the contemporary world, between the tabernacle and the street (See Appendix J, FDE 21, St Francis College website).

A number of concepts are embedded in this definition. First, the College's understanding of evangelisation presupposes "the presence and work of the Holy Spirit already in all young people and their experiences" (para. 2). Second, evangelisation invites people to encounter God through Catholic faith opportunities offered at the College. Finally, the New Evangelisation is "seeking to build a bridge between the ancient faith and the contemporary world, between the tabernacle and the street" (para. 3) through committed young people who themselves become evangelisers.

Consequently, there are multiple understandings of the New Evangelisation evident among participants, as shown in Table 5.11.



**Table 5.11**

*Case Study Two: How do Teachers Understand the New Evangelisation?*

Codes	Emerging Themes	Synthesised Concepts
Relating not converting Invitation Connecting Providing opportunities Adopting new approaches Bringing people back to the Church	Connecting Converting Relating New approaches	Inviters
Witness Not new Teacher's role Mission Ministry Discipleship Challenge Reinvigorating faith	Mission Discipleship Witness Challenge Not new	Invigorators

The analysis of these understandings generates the following categorisation of how teachers understand the concept of the New Evangelisation:

The inviters: these teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the invitation to all at St Francis to encounter God, particularly through the Catholic community; and

The invigorators: these teachers understand the New Evangelisation as a particular mission of the contemporary Catholic Church, aiming to invigorate the faith of baptised Catholics.

**5.3.3.1 The inviters.**

The inviters are those who understand the New Evangelisation as an invitation extended to all at St Francis College to encounter God, particularly through the Catholic community. This understanding of the New Evangelisation is consistent with the College's published definition of evangelisation:

An invitation extended to young people to encounter a personal experience with Jesus Christ through the Church. It encourages all ages to live every day of their lives as witnesses; evangelising others and the culture in which they live. It provides opportunities and conversations that deepen young people's relationship

with God, encouraging them to live as disciples and discover Christ's invitation to full sacramental relationship with Him. The Liturgy is to be considered the central place of evangelisation. (see Appendix J, FDE 21, St Francis College website)

Four concepts, generated from an analysis of the data, further illustrate the inviters' understanding of the New Evangelisation. First, these teachers invite others to commit, or in some cases, re-commit themselves to practising Catholicism. This occurs through inviting staff and students to engage with local Catholic parishes as well as assisting with charitable works such as the St Vincent de Paul night patrol. Some participants focus their invitations primarily on staff, so that they may appropriately evangelise students. "... What I focus on [with the] New Evangelisation...[is] staff, and connecting them, and then that will then have the impact on the students (FGL3, June 11, 2014).

Second, inviters understand that evangelisation occurs in the context of daily school life. Consequently, they believe that the effectiveness of their invitation to connect staff and students with the Catholic community is influenced by the authenticity of their relationships with them. Inviters indicate that "there are moments of evangelising during the day" and "that the day-to-day evangelising that goes on" at the College is effective when it is grounded on authentic relationships (FGL2, June 11, 2014). And further,

[The New Evangelisation is] not that difficult. It's about affirming staff and students and parents in their own baptismal rite to be the beloved and to be. It's about affirming people, not about telling them they've got to go to Mass or do this and this and this. It's about affirming who they are as sons and daughters of God. I know that sounds very holy and theological, but that's its simplicity and its principle. If you bear that in mind, it's not that hard. It's about acknowledging people's work, acknowledging when their spirits need resting. It's about offering wisdom or advice or replenishing. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

This relational approach to evangelisation is summarised in the approach of a school leader whose "final word [on] evangelisation is about 'being with'" (FGL2, June 11, 2014).

Consequently, these teachers distinguish between evangelisation and conversion. Their invitational and relational approach to evangelisation is concerned with establishing quality relationships and then, perhaps, through these enabling relationships, influencing

others to engage with Catholic life and practice. These participants do not believe the New Evangelisation is concerned with conversion. This difference is explained by one senior leader:

...my focus on the New Evangelisation is about staff and trying to connect staff to [the Church]. It's not so much about converting our non-Catholic staff to Catholicism. But it's about the message of what we are as a Catholic community and getting that message out to staff and how it can be lived in what they do. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)

Finally, these teachers understand the New Evangelisation as inviting others to experience Catholic life and practice. These experiences are diverse, innovative and encompass both traditional and non-traditional experiences of Catholicism (see Table 5.10). These teachers describe the New Evangelisation as

Bringing people back to the Church, [especially] baptised Catholics who've moved away from the Church, who've drifted away for whatever reason [and] bringing them back and reconnecting them with their faith and their parish. (FGT15, June 11, 2014)

### **5.3.3.2 *The invigorators.***

The invigorators believe that the New Evangelisation is a particular mission of the contemporary Catholic Church, which aims to reinvigorate the faith of baptised Catholics. This perspective amplifies the evangelising responsibilities of teachers in Catholic schools:

I think evangelisation is part of who we are as educators....I understand the point that it's new because it's just trying to reinvigorate the sense of the sacred stuff. But as teachers in a Catholic school part of our role is to evangelise and [Evangelisation is] about transformation of hearts and minds. (FGT15, June 11, 2014)

They reflect Pope Francis' approach to contemporary evangelisation (Bevans, 2014b) as these teachers use the word mission interchangeably with the term New Evangelisation. This is because they believe the New Evangelisation is a continuation of the mission of Jesus:

[The New Evangelisation] can be summed up in quite a few different ways, but I think mission is a really key point. [The New Evangelisation] is living out our faith, but connecting it to the students, to something that is real through concrete examples or experiences [such as] mission work [or] immersion...I can't... distinguish between evangelisation as what we've always been doing and the New Evangelisation....We have to set the example for the students to go forth. But they are invited. We cannot force them. So, it's that constant invitation and that's exactly what Jesus did. He was a man of mission and we recreate that every day through our actions. Then, therefore, the students will go forth and do the same. Well, that's the hope anyway. (FGT12, June 11, 2014)

They conceptualise the New Evangelisation as extending the mission of Jesus by invigorating the faith of students at the College:

I think it's [the New Evangelisation] about developing their [students'] faith just on a day-to-day basis.... I don't think they've been away from their religion. I think it's just reinvigorating their own learnings that they've had in the past that perhaps they didn't connect with [and] trying to get them to connect with that today. (FGL4, June 11, 2014)

So, while these teachers may not necessarily use the term, New Evangelisation, they do understand it is imperative to invigorate the faith of students and staff:

...I'm not real keen on the word 'new'...I think it's the world's most misunderstood term...I think it's connected to the preachers and the Jimmy Bakers and the Tammy Bakers. I think we need to kind of flesh it out and make it a bit real in our day-to-day-ness. (IL2, June 11, 2014)

Further, they believe that the invigoration of faith is realised primarily in the witness of teachers:

You've got teachers who have chosen specifically to be at a Catholic school. Some of the teachers we have at this school are living their faith and it comes across. It just comes out of them. That real need to share their witness and their beliefs. I think that's really strong. They're not necessarily RE teachers. They're just teachers who really believe in the faith and the charisms of their particular school. It really, really comes out in just everything they do. (FGT13, June 11, 2014)

Consequently, they suggest that their role is to fan “the fire” in the lives of young people:

...I read something a while ago doing some university course which stuck with me. It was about this same sort of thing. It was registered as keeping the fire burning inside. The fire's always there, but it probably simmers away. Then comes back. And so, I think if I can use that metaphor, [the New Evangelisation] would be about keeping that fire burning inside that they've always had but they may not have realised that it needed to be maintained. (FGT14, June 11, 2014)

However, participants acknowledge that the context of the College is specific, and that this context determines how they invigorate the faith of others. First, they experience St Francis as a comfortable place to learn, saying, “I think these kids are really comfortable in their learning community and I think they're comfortable in their learning. So, I suppose to evangelise means to make people uncomfortable” (IL2, June 11, 2014).

Consequently, these participants describe their approach to the New Evangelisation as offering experiences that challenge the complacency of students and staff:

[The New Evangelisation] is about making people feel a bit less [comfortable].... What's that saying from Mary Mackillop? There's something about God doesn't call the equipped. God equips the called. So, it's almost like you've got to lead them to be uncomfortable in order to change them. So [a] classic [example] is Matt. The other night, I took four girls in uniform and another staff member who was a young one to Matt Talbot's. I don't know who was more uncomfortable, the staff member or the kids? We just had to stand there and wait until they...[were]...almost out of their skins, and gradually you saw the fellows would come up and talk to them gradually. By the end of it, these girls are smiling, big smiles on their face, [and we] couldn't shut them up all the way home. So, they were uncomfortable. If they'd known, they would have been uncomfortable I don't think they would have gone. So, you have to be clever about leading them to their uncomfortability. (IL2, June 11, 2014)

Second, the experience of the Royal Commission (ARCIRCSA, 2017) influences these invigorators' understanding of the New Evangelisation. They indicate that the Royal

Commission offers opportunities to reinvigorate authentic expressions of contemporary discipleship. One participant compared the Royal Commission to:

...the Jesus story. They use the brokenness and the being beaten and being whipped and whatever with the Resurrection. That's the rising. I think it's the same as our church. The humanness of our church is terrible, absolutely terrible, and soul-destroying....I think if we truly believe that the Kingdom of God is on earth, then we need to see the brokenness. Does that make any sense? So, what we're living through now. It is the signs of the times. This is the true Vatican II stuff.... What we're facing today is the challenge. (IL2, June 11, 2014)

#### **5.3.4 Case study two: Specific research question three.**

The third specific research question structuring the conduct of this study is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools respond to the New Evangelisation? Data addressing this question were generated from interviews and the analysis of documents. This process is demonstrated in Table 5.12.

**Table 5.12**

*Case Study Two: Research Question Three–Emerging Themes*

Codes	Emerging themes	Concepts
Witness Relational	Witness Relationships	Relational witnessing
Presume faith Inclusion Involve the community	Communal Inclusion Innate spirituality	Inclusion
Utilising Catholic life and practice Sacraments Parish	Relying on the Tradition Organisational structures	Utilising Church structures
Creatively Providing Opportunities Disturbing	Creativity Disruption	Creativity and disruption

*Note.* Table illustrates the process by which data were analysed using codes that generated themes and synthesised concepts.

A synthesis of themes identifies four concepts that explain how teachers respond to the New Evangelisation at St Francis:

1. Relational witnessing
2. Inclusion
3. Utilising Church structures
4. Creativity and disruption

As with Case Study One (see Section 5.2.3), the staff members' lack of consensus concerning how the New Evangelisation is understood influences how they implement it. Table 5.13 illustrates this relationship.

**Table 5.13***Case Study Two: Teachers' Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation*

Understandings	Emerging themes	Responses
Inviters Invigorators	Witness Relational	Relational witnessing
Inviters	Communal Inclusion Spiritual	Inclusion
Invigorators Inviters	Relying on the Tradition Organisational structures	Utilising Church structures
Invigorators	Creativity Disruption	Creativity and disruption

*Note.* Table illustrates relationship between teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation according to how they understand it.

The categorisations in Table 5.13 identify the relationship between teachers' understandings of the New Evangelisation and their responses to it.

#### ***5.3.4.1 Relational witnessing.***

Some teachers at St Francis College respond to the New Evangelisation through their relationships with others. These teachers report that the influence of their Christian witness, embedded in authentic relationships, leads to opportunities for evangelisation. Indeed, this relational witnessing reflects Jesus' evangelical behaviour as recorded in the Gospels (Samaan, 2012). There are a number of concepts which explain relational witnessing as a response to the New Evangelisation.

First, these teachers indicate that the one of the strengths of Catholic schools generally, and St Francis in particular, is the quality of the relationships between students and staff:

The kids love coming to school, and I would say it's a sense of belonging, a sense of being a part of the community. They really, really love their teachers, seriously. In any Catholic school I could say this. I could be talking about any school I've worked in. The strength of our system is the relationship between staff and students, for sure, without a doubt. It's the heart of it. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)



Consequently, they report that it is through the quality of their relationships and their care of others that they respond to the New Evangelisation. These teachers reflect the understanding of the New Evangelisation as being with others and respond to it in their relationships with others:

I think actually it [the New Evangelisation] gets back to the relational. [The Assistant Principal] does it fabulously in terms of [the] dignity and respect [he extends to] the staff [by] giving staff an opportunity to be heard [and] to make mistakes. [The New Evangelisation] is to work with staff and sit with kids and staff on their journey...on that particular day. [It is] to be available, to be present in the community. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

Second, relational witnessing is a dynamic which is inclusive of all members of the College community. These teachers report that their witness extends beyond the students and their colleagues to the parent community:

I think the role we have goes well and truly beyond that classroom. We go back to the fact that our parent bodies are probably...pretty much cultural Catholics. So, we [are] providing guidance and [responding to the] New Evangelisation in a new evangelical mode to the parent community...albeit [that] you don't see them all that often. (FGT14, June 11, 2014)

Third, these teachers indicate that in the absence of religious Brothers and Sisters, they are now responsible for evangelisation:

I probably will add one other thing and that is that obviously we don't have brothers and nuns. They would have been seen within schools of our period of time as the religious leaders, whether that was an official title or not. We don't have that anymore....So, therefore, the teacher role is highly significant now in the spiritual faith dimension and new evangelisation continuum of [developing] faith and spiritual beliefs. So, it's really important for us to do that [evangelise] because now we are the face of the Church and the voice of the Church within our school. (FGT14, June 11, 2014)

Consequently, participants report that their witness as teachers, is a means of evangelisation. They indicate that this witness is even more effective when it is expressed through quality relationships. Teachers believe that there is a mutually reinforcing

dynamic occurring because the witness of teachers is more authentic when right relationships pervades the school's culture:

I think one really positive thing is developing the relationship between students and teachers. I think about back in those times when...we'd been going on Night Patrol [feeding the homeless] and they'd say, "Hey! I did Night Patrol with you. That was good." I think it develops that relationship with teachers too. I think it's a beautiful thing. It makes it so positive. (FGL4, June 11, 2014)

Relational witnessing as a response to the New Evangelisation relies on the commitment of teachers to "cultivate mutually beneficial relationships" (Bowe, 2009, p. 3). It is grounded in teachers' witness to their faith, the quality of their relationships with others and school leaders' expectations of teachers, as noted by FGL2's comment, "I'd expect staff to be young men and women of the gospel. That's how I see it. You don't say that in an interview, but that's what you would expect. It doesn't mean they're perfect" (FGL2, June 11, 2014).

#### ***5.3.4.2 Inclusion.***

Some teachers at St Francis' respond to the New Evangelisation by ensuring the inclusion of all members of the College community in Catholic life and practice. The nature of this inclusion is informed by a twofold understanding of their community.

First, they recognise that this experience may be "very insular" (FGL2, June 11, 2014) because, for most, it is their only encounter with Catholicism (FGT12, June 11, 2014). Teachers experience staff and students as having limited commitment to traditional Catholicism. However, despite this limited affiliation, they experience staff and students as no less open to evangelisation opportunities than those in other school communities, whose affiliation and practice might be more traditional. Comparing leadership of a previous Catholic school with that at St Francis, a participant commented:

The challenge in that [previous] school community was to break through the piety. Whereas [at] this one [St Francis], we don't have to worry about pious practice. It's really interesting. You cannot make the assumption that there is no faith practice, [that] there is no desire for evangelisation and that it's not happening because those things [religious affiliations] are different [at St Francis]. You cannot jump to that assumption because it is a faith-filled community. I have no

doubt that Jesus and the Gospels are at the centre of this community. It just looks different to the previous place. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)

Second, these participants indicate that their approach to the evangelisation of others is informed by their own experiences of being evangelised. Comparing their own faith development to a roller coaster experience, a relatively young teacher explained this approach to evangelisation:

I always describe it to them [students] as a bit like a roller coaster. I know that a few years ago I went to the Holy Land and I was at a really low point...But it probably was the best place in the world for me to be to provide such a huge connection [for me] ...with my faith. That really cemented [my] understanding of ...the students' [faith journey]. [Their faith journey] is a little roller coaster or it is a little squiggly line [and] they're going to come off the path sometimes. But it doesn't mean they won't come back on it. We need to be understanding [and] they really need to know it's okay. (FGT13, June 11, 2014)

Consequently, these teachers respond to the New Evangelisation by ensuring that no person, regardless of age, experience or religious affiliation, is excluded from involvement in Catholic life and practice offered at the College. They evangelise by “constantly providing the invitation” (FGT12, June 11, 2014) to experience Catholic life and practice. Two distinct means of invitation are chosen by these teachers.

First, these teachers adopt a language of inclusion. They ensure that the nature of Catholic life and practice is communicated in College publications. They cite Pope Francis as a model for their practice:

I think Pope Francis is great for the Church in terms of his accessibility for people and the language that he uses in his communications. It's really refreshing to have people and a leader of the Church, but also other priests and religious and lay people, who really speak in a language that doesn't exclude. I think that sometimes people turn away from a church where they don't have access to it, and they don't understand a lot of what's being said or the reasons for things. I think that opportunity to really have that deeper understanding is important. (FGT15, June 11, 2014)

Participants believe that by deliberately inviting students and staff to participate in Catholic life and practice, staff and students are more likely to engage with contemporary Catholicism.

Second, these teachers ensure that a range of evangelisation opportunities are available to all staff and students. These opportunities are provided by both the College and by local Catholic agencies:

I feel like it's through the invitation for families and for students to join with this community and...to live out...in celebrations of the sacraments,...social justice activities,...communal prayer life and...private prayer,...[and] in educating and providing opportunities for them to connect with the wider church through things like World Youth Day or immersion experiences [that we evangelise]. (FGT15, June 11, 2014).

#### ***5.3.4.3 Utilising Church structures.***

The Roman Catholic Church, as both an institution and a pilgrim people manifests itself in a variety of ways across nations and cultures (Pope Francis, 2013, p. 115). At St Francis College, the organic institutional structures of the Catholic Church are, for some participants, a means of responding to the New Evangelisation. Consequently, these teachers utilise the institutional structures emanating from the parish. They also rely on the liturgical calendar of the Catholic Church and the celebration of the Eucharist to evangelise.

First, some teachers utilise the parish structure to respond to the New Evangelisation. The parish structure provides teachers with an established means by which students and staff may experience the contemporary Catholic community. This occurs through such opportunities as the College's engagement with the student-led Catechesis program in the local primary school, as well as in parish-based fundraising initiatives supporting the poor in underdeveloped countries. These parish structures enable relationships to develop between the College and the parish, its priest and the local primary school. Such initiatives become the catalyst to engage St Francis College with the local Catholic community:

I feel like it's through the invitation for families and for students to join with this community and with this parish to live out both in celebrations of the sacraments,...in social justice activities,...in communal prayer life,...in

encouraging private prayer,...in educating and providing opportunities for them to connect with the wider church through things like World Youth Day or immersion experiences or those sorts of things [that evangelisation occurs]. (FGT14, June 11, 2014)

These participants believe such evangelising opportunities generated through the partnership of the parish priest with the College are value-added:

I'd say that we have a parish priest who is running parallel with our thoughts [and] who has a presence at the college...I just think that it's a good thing to know that your parish priest is seeing things through the same avenues and in homilies connects with whoever's in front of him. (FGT14, June 11, 2014)

Second, these participants adopt the calendar of the Catholic Church to structure evangelisation initiatives:

[The Principal] always writes in the newsletter, connecting [the community] to the feasts of the church or connecting it to the parish...I think if nothing else, families are reading that and connecting in some way or maybe taking up the invitation even to attend a trivia night in the parish or something that just reconnects and establishes that link [with the Catholic community]. (FGT11, June 11, 2014)

The use of this structure provides an established means to engage others in common prayer and celebration, connecting the College community with parish life and supporting the evangelising efforts of teachers. Participants indicate that

...of all the different things [we do] to evangelise, [the] Liturgy [is] one of the main ones. [It is] Christ's invitation to full sacramental relationship with him and you do that through liturgy. (FGT12, June 11, 2014)

Finally, these teachers believe that the celebration of the Eucharist is a primary means of evangelisation. For them, the Eucharist is "at the heart of the school" (FGT15, June 11, 2014). Students and staff have opportunities to celebrate the Eucharist at least weekly. These teachers experience students and staff as being receptive to the Eucharist as reflected on one participant's first experience of Eucharist at the College:

I was nervous at the start of the year at the St Paddy's Mass, only because of the numbers and the place that we held it. I was struck by the reverence of the

students. They were so reverent, and they just really had a sense of the occasion. However, in terms of liturgical ritual and response, it's obvious to me that it's not a regular practice. They're not practised, but they're reverent.... The kids are hungry for their spirits to be fed and particularly in the smaller class Masses I see prayerfulness and their desire to belong. They get it. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)

Overall, participants believe the structures of the Catholic Church are appropriate strategies to engage in evangelisation. Consequently, teachers promote the relationship with the Catholic community as they respond to the New Evangelisation.

#### ***5.3.4.4 Creativity and disruption.***

Some participants adapt their responses to the New Evangelisation to accommodate staff and students who have a limited connection to the Catholic Church. These responses are characterised by their creativity and their intention to challenge those who are complacent in their faith.

First, these teachers indicate that in order to respond effectively to the New Evangelisation, they “need to be the Gospel in a clever way” (FGL2, June 11, 2014). Consequently, they have developed creative opportunities to evangelise others, rather than simply relying on the communal life of the local parish, the Liturgy or the celebration of the Eucharist (see Section 5.3.4.3.):

[We have] realised that there's this need that we have to give these opportunities to kids. So, we've actively got to have evangelisation days and have appointed youth ministers in schools and things like that. [We realise] that there's a need but the way we respond to that is by providing all these opportunities for kids to be invited to participate in. (FGT11, June 11, 2014)

These creative opportunities include a recently introduced overseas immersion program and a revised senior retreat program. Participants indicate that these initiatives are less explicitly Catholic because they are specifically planned to meet the needs of students lacking traditional Catholic backgrounds. This is because participants experience many staff and students as “not so much connected to church and to church practice.... It's more about a Christian base” (FGL2, June 11, 2014). Given this understanding of some in their community, these teachers

...realise as well that...we need to change our approach. That the kids are changing, we're dealing with different children, even to when we started teaching. They're different children. They're exposed to different things and...we need to present that information [about Catholicism] to them and work out a way to get that fire into them and get them out there doing it. (FGT13, June 11, 2014)

Second, participants seek to create opportunities to challenge the supposed complacency of some staff and students in regard to contemporary Catholicism. They believe that effective evangelising includes creating experiences that disturb the beliefs of staff and students: "I think these kids are really comfortable in their learning community and I think they're comfortable in their learning. So, I suppose to evangelise means to make people uncomfortable" (FGL2, June 11, 2014).

Consequently, these teachers generate experiences that disturb the status quo in order to hopefully offer a deeper reflection on contemporary matters of faith. This is illustrated in the approach of one participant in a Senior Religious Education class:

Well there was a discussion about [whether]...priest[s] have the right to not give communion to a gay parishioner. So, I thought that was quite interesting for the Year 12 students to receive that question. I was sceptical at first that they had the maturity to deal with that question, but in that environment, it was very productive. (FGT12, June 11, 2014)

Further, the experience of these participants is that such approaches are also formative of teachers as evangelisers:

You can hear the pin drop when you talk about refugees and stuff like that. We had the Founders' Week and for some reason...I spoke to all the year groups, and ...I decided to [speak about] refugees. So, it was just terrible. I feel embarrassed to think about it. But people were uncomfortable. A staff member told his story and cried in front of the kids. It was uncomfortable, but I think those kids probably won't forget that [I] got embarrassed or went red or whatever and we talked about refugees. I can't believe I...then [had] kids all coming up and talking about that [experience]. So, the evangeliser becomes uncomfortable too. It's not just the person you're doing it with. We, as leaders, have to be uncomfortable. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

## 5.4 Case Study 3: St John's College

### 5.4.1 Context.

John Bede Polding, an English Benedictine monk was appointed as the first vicar apostolic or missionary bishop of Australia in 1835. As the population of Australia grew, the Catholic Church also expanded and from 1848 dioceses began to be formed. A diocese is a geographical area under the authority of a bishop and in some cases, these dioceses combine to form an Archdiocese under the authority of an Archbishop (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2016). In 1842, Polding became the first Archbishop of Sydney (Luttrell, 2008) and was succeeded by six Archbishops charged with the leadership of the Archdiocese of Sydney (Dixon, Hughes, & CRA, 2005). The Archdiocese of Sydney is one of the 11 dioceses in New South Wales (NSW), each under the authority of its own Bishop and with its own agencies, including Diocesan Catholic Education Office (CEO). The CEOs of all the dioceses are responsible for the provision of Catholic education in 580 primary and secondary schools in NSW (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007).

With the rapid population growth of Sydney following World War II, the Archdiocese of Sydney developed new parishes and schools in the burgeoning and largely migrant suburbs on the outskirts of the city. In 1985 St John's College was established in one of these suburbs becoming the newest coeducational Catholic Secondary College in the city. It consisted of six demountable classrooms, 105 students and 9 teachers. Moreover, St John's College was the first of several coeducational Catholic secondary schools established by the Archdiocese without the involvement of a religious congregation of teaching priests or religious. In part, this was because St John's foundation coincided with the period of the declining number of religious teaching brothers and sisters and the increase in the number of lay teachers (Coughlan, 2009). Consequently, St John's was founded with a lay Principal and lay teaching staff. The college did not claim a particular religious charism to underpin its culture. Consequently, the charism of St John's College reflects the priorities of the foundation staff, students and the broader Catholic community.

People of Chinese and Vietnamese descent predominate the 8000 people who live in the suburb in which St John's is located. Seventy-two per cent of people speak a language other than English at home. Forty-four per cent have completed Year 12 or the



equivalent. While 26% of the population identify themselves as Roman Catholic this number is in decline. In contrast, 34% are Buddhists (ABS, 2017b).

The 2017 annual report of the college reveals that St John's enrolls over 1300 students in Years 7–12, 90% of whom have a language background other than English. Eighty-four per cent of students complete Year 12 and the College enjoys a student attendance rate of 95%. The College has been ranked as the highest performing Catholic systemic school in NSW. Further, ninety per cent of Year 12 students attend University, and/or further education following their graduation (see Appendix J, JDE 11). Given both the demographic growth and the academic success of the College, enrolment demand consistently exceeds availability of places. Consequently, the College, adheres to the Archdiocesan categories for enrolment (Catholic Education Office, 2012a), by enrolling children from Catholic families who are regularly practising Catholics or those who are enrolled in the Catholic Primary feeder schools. Therefore, over 93% of students in the College identify as Catholic.

The College employs 115 teaching and support staff with 32 years being the average age of teachers. The relative youthfulness of the teaching faculty is a feature of the College, as are the number of graduates who become teachers. In the past six years, over 100 students have chosen to study teaching and 13 of these now teach at St John's.

#### **5.4.2 Case study three: Specific research question one.**

The first specific research question that focuses the conduct of this research is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism? Participants' responses to Research Question One are synthesised in Table 5.14.

**Table 5.14***Case Study Three: Teachers' Experiences of Contemporary Catholicism*

Research Question One: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?		
Codes	Emerging Themes	Synthesised Concepts
Increase in non-practising Catholics Minimal parish participation Competing priorities Scandals	Minimal practice beyond school Nominal Catholicism Obstacles	Minimal Catholic practice beyond the school
More traditional practices evident Reverence for Catholic practices Better understanding of charisms	Return to traditional Catholic practices Acceptance of Catholic practices Lay teacher leadership	Respect and engagement with the Catholic Tradition
School as Church Schools are more Catholic Schools are an anomaly in the Church Increasing lay leadership	Schools are more Catholic than in the past Schools are the primary place of practice	Catholic schools ensure Catholic practice

Three concepts generated from the data analysis processes address Research Question One. These are:

1. Minimal Catholic practice beyond the school;
2. Respect and engagement with the Catholic Tradition; and
3. Catholic practice ensured in Catholic schools.

#### ***5.4.2.1 Minimal Catholic practice beyond the school.***

Participants at St John's experience contemporary Catholicism primarily at the College. The school's context is unique in this Archdiocesan system of schools. This is because the school's foundation derived from the demand for a Catholic school from local parishioners and their priests. Consequently, St John's now shares the same geographical site and facilities as the parish church and primary school. Most enrolments come from St John's parish. Families are affiliated with a Catholic parish, especially St John's. Therefore, participants acknowledge that their experience of a contemporary Catholic community where so many families and their children practise their faith is an anomaly:

My observation is that [St John's] is atypical because we have so many Catholics in the school...I think we'd probably have one of the highest percentages of families that are, (a) active in the parish and (b) still going to Mass. Now, the statistics says on average it's a third, well yeah, I think they're probably a little bit higher than a third to be honest. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

The reason for this phenomenon is the demand for places in this highly successful secondary school. However, some participants indicate that while a family's Catholicity strengthens the enrolment prospects for their children, it does not necessarily indicate a regularity of Mass attendance:

When they come here most of them practise supposedly. But that seems to wane a bit as they get on. [It seems] that's how they get into the school—by saying that they practise and get involved in stuff [in the parish] and then they get in [to St John's College] and some stop practising. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Therefore, some participants experience contemporary Catholicism as a means to securing a quality education. Further, they indicate that nominal Catholicism is an increasing phenomenon at St John's. Nominal Catholics are understood to be those who identify as Catholics in name but do not adhere to traditional Catholic practices such as regular attendance at Sunday Eucharist (Stevenson et al., 2010). Nominal Catholicism is not necessarily a new phenomenon for some participants:

Well, I was at school in the Seventies and despite what people might think there was still a good proportion...of people who didn't attend church. They didn't

attend Mass. Yeah, it's hard to estimate [now] in that Year 12 group [then] how many families...or boys wouldn't have gone to Mass...It could have been as many as 50 % but probably it was two-thirds. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Participants cite four reasons for the prevalence of nominal Catholicism at St John's. First, some teachers believe that many children in the school come from Catholic families where generations of family members have not practised their Catholic faith, especially in regard to regular reception of the Sacraments. Participants believe:

... Home life can really play a factor [in students' practice of faith]. I mean we try to develop this environment [at St John's] of sharing and being a part of it [contemporary Catholicism]. But many families are not active in their faith, and this [experience at St John's] is something new to them. It's [Catholic practice] not modelled at home. In some ways it may not even be respected at home. So, a lot of kids are probably here for the quality education. I think that it's almost, 'I don't do it at home, but I've got to do it school'. I guess that's a bit of a struggle for some kids. (FGL5, August 18, 2014)

In fact, grandparents are cited by students as primary models of Catholic faith and practice. Participants indicate that students' Catholic faith is important to them. Nevertheless, they have not been exposed to the regular practice of the Catholic by the family:

There's, to some extent, successive generations [of Catholic's who] don't have the intensity of the faith of their grandparents. When we do S.R.C. (Student Representative Council) interviews and when I ask [them to] tell me about what your faith means to you, nearly every single one starts with their grandparents. [I'm not sure whether that has] been the job of the grandparents to do that [in the family]...[Students] definitely have faith and they definitely see faith as important. It's the next step in being active in their faith that they don't seem to do. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Second, some participants perceive Australia lacks a contemporary Catholic cultural identity. In the past, the Catholic parish and school provided many social activities and the local parish was a hub of social life for Catholic families (Bouma, 2006). Consequently, Catholic identity was formed within a local Catholic community in which the parish had an important role in the life of families and community. Participants

experience a lack of parish affiliation among families at the College. Consequently, they indicate that the Catholic identity of many students and staff is associated with their experience at St John's. Some participants lament the loss of a distinct Australian Catholic identity more typical of their own childhood:

I think part of the reason that we've lost people... [is that] we lost a [Catholic] culture, and for us it's building up a culture, and a culture in a different way. Like in Sydney, the Catholic culture was so strong they didn't really need to do anything, so they just ran activities. But we needed to build up a Catholic culture again... [To be seen] that being a Catholic means that we do things that are a little bit different. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Third, despite this context, students indicate to teachers that Catholic faith is important to them. However, they also have competing demands. Not surprisingly, the practice of their Catholic faith, outside of the College context, is not a priority for them:

Many of them [students] say that today they have too many conflicting activities and unfortunately attending Mass is not a priority for them. Having said that, I think they do embrace every single opportunity they get from a school perspective. If they do like attending Mass they participate really well, they get involved, especially [St John's] day Mass. They're extremely reverent when they do attend Mass. So, they do appreciate the opportunities that they have through the College to give them the opportunity to strengthen their faith. They do love retreat; they always speak highly of opportunities for retreat. (FGL5, August 18, 2014)

Finally, participants identify the deleterious impact of the scandals of institutional child sexual abuse within the Australian Catholic Church. They cite this as a reason for minimal Catholic practice beyond the College. While many families, students and staff may be committed Catholics, the ongoing revelations of abuse and the institutional failures in responding to child sexual abuse within the Australian Catholic Church have led to a disassociation of Catholics from the Church:

We're lucky here in terms of the commitment of many of the families, but certainly the scandals have driven people away. I think these are things that need to be dealt with [and] to do New Evangelisation activities in isolation to that [the scandal] is never going to work. (FGL7, August 18, 2014)

#### ***5.4.2.2. Respect for and engagement with the Catholic tradition.***

St John's is a unique Catholic school in that it is lay-led and staffed exclusively by lay teachers. Religious did not educate most staff at St John's. Further, St John's does not rely on a Religious charism or a Religious Institute for its expression of Catholic belief and practice. At the same time, many within the College community are nominally Catholic and consequently do not have the regular experience of Catholic practice and community beyond that offered at St John's. Despite this context, participants experience a general respect for and engagement with contemporary Catholicism at the College. Participants cite two reasons for this.

First, they interpret the respect for and engagement with contemporary Catholicism as passive acceptance by some. They cite staff and student participation at College celebrations of the Eucharist to support this view. A school leader indicated that while he experienced students' respect for contemporary Catholicism, he regarded this more as a reflection of the compliance of students in general, rather than commitment to Catholicism:

[Students are] exceptionally reverent. [However], there's still that distinction between reverence and participation. That is hard to change, although we're making some progress. Over the years, I've just put it down to an adolescent thing. But how to get them to want to participate still remains a challenge. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Second, some participants equate the decline in the number of religious Sisters and Brothers working in schools and the commensurate increase in lay teachers as a reason for greater engagement with Catholicism. They indicate that the transition to lay leadership of Catholic schools from the Religious has facilitated a renewed commitment to contemporary Catholicism among teachers. They cite the enthusiasm and interests in Charismatic traditions associated with Australian Catholic schools as evidence of this:

[When I] started teaching...both the Christian Brothers and the Marist Brothers had lay formation programs for their staff. They did a great job explaining Edmund Rice and Marcellin Champagnat much better than I got at school. So, I think in that period after the 70s there has been a really concerted effort to actually take on board what these teaching orders are and what they mean and what our Faith means....So I think that probably the removal of the Religious from the

schools forced that to happen. In some ways, while it wasn't good...that they went that way...I think there was a deepening of the charism and a deepening of the faith and a deepening of the spirituality since then. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Further, participants at St John's experience renewed efforts by teachers to provide experiences of traditional Catholic practices for the school community. For example, one participant indicated that while he could not "ever remember doing the rosary [when he attended] school, [but at St John's] we have 50 or 60 kids here at the Rosary every Friday" (FGL6, August 18, 2014).

One participant reflected on the broader impact of this traditional practice at the College:

I think a lot of programs have been instituted in the last few years that have got kids to be able to access at their level. I'll just use Rosary as an example. You've got that core group [who pray the Rosary weekly]. But then when there is something special, it's amazing to see how kids come and spend that five minutes as a group for prayer. It's really good to see that they are able to access it even if it is only once every now and then. (FGT18, August 18, 2014)

Participants also expressed surprise at the enthusiasm young people exhibit for traditional Catholic practices. A number of participants cite students' willingness to experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation to support this experience:

Many would, in fact, say that they don't attend Mass as often as they would like and that's pretty evident. [However], when you do offer Reconciliation to the students...they would take it on board. In fact, at one stage we were getting queues of kids taking the opportunity to receive reconciliation. (FGL5, August 18, 2014)

Consequently, these participants experience respect for and engagement with contemporary Catholicism at St John's. They view this as positive and they express the hope that expressions of contemporary Catholicism continue to be provided and developed:

Being Catholic and living Christian lives has to be priority number one really. I mean, "Shut the school down, stop your lessons everybody, we need to pray for something". I'd love to see that happen. Right in the middle of a random period

three, the bell goes, everyone just freezes you know, or we say the Angelus or something at midday like we used too many years ago. Something like that. What's wrong with that? I'd be ready to stand up and argue with anyone who wants to argue about it, and say, "Well this is a Catholic school, what's the problem?" (FGT17, August 18, 2014)

#### ***5.4.2.3 Catholic practice ensured in Catholic schools.***

Participants indicate that St John's in particular, and Catholic schools generally, promote Catholicism. They experience Catholic schools as the primary place where people encounter the Catholicism. They believe that it is in Catholic schools that many Catholics practice their faith and that, in effect, Catholic schools ensure that Catholicism continues to be a meaningful experience. The feedback they receive from St John's graduates confirms this:

Speaking to a lot of ex-Year 12 students when they come back, that's one thing that they say that they miss about the school. [That] is that faith-filled community. Even though most of our students go to A.C.U. (Australian Catholic University), there are a lot of kids that might go to [other Universities]. They say that what they miss is that pastoral aspect [and] that faith-filled community. That we [teachers at St John's] actually recognise them as a person and there's that personal touch. I think that's important. When they come back and say that, obviously we have touched them, and we've changed them in some way. (FGL5, August 18, 2014)

In fact, these participants experience Catholic schools as "overtly Catholic" (FGT18, August 18, 2014). They indicate that there is "a lot more emphasis... [on] promoting not only Religious Education, but the Catholicism of the school" (FGT21, August 18, 2014) since they were at school. And further, St John's, rather than the parish, is the primary place of formation for Catholic students:

I feel like now there's [*sic*] a lot more opportunities for faith formation. We have Masses, we have year group Masses [that] we didn't have that when I was at school. We have the feast day Masses which is I feel [are] becoming more regular. [There are] opportunities for kids to get involved more frequently within that setting. I think that's the biggest difference that I notice [since I was at school]. I mean I've only ever been here for the six years, and since I came here, I feel like



that's developing more and more. There's a lot more in place for kids to develop in their faith. (FGT21, August 18, 2014)

Participants indicate that the influence of this emphasis at the College is experienced in student's enthusiasm for contemporary expressions of Catholicism. As FGT18 noted, "They're always coming up to me, 'How can we get involved Miss? We want to help people in this way. What charity can we set up? What meeting can we hold?' There's always something they want to do" (August 18, 2014).

However, while these participants acknowledge the influence of St John's in ensuring many experiences of Catholicism, some believe this influence is problematic. The problem is twofold. First, while participants indicate that the experience of contemporary Catholicism at St John's is positive, few Catholics practise their faith beyond the school:

There is, I think, a variation of levels of familiarity I think is the point. I guess for some students' school is their only [contact with church] –and they may identify as Catholic and we know this is a general thing, that a lot of people identify but it doesn't necessarily mean they're practising. I think that all—obviously the 90 odd per cent of our kids identify as Catholic. (FGT20, August 18, 2014)

Second, they indicate that the school provides the primary experience of contemporary Catholicism for many Catholics students, families and teachers. However, they believe that this is problematic because the school is replacing the parish as the primary experience of Catholicism:

Many of them are seeing us [The College] as the Church which is an enormous problem because we're not the Church. We're part of the Church and we're an integral part of the Church. But they're increasingly having this view that what we do here at school is enough. Full stop. And they either won't or don't or aren't interested in going that step further to be involved in, say, a parish. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

#### **5.4.3 Case study three: Specific research question two.**

The second specific research question focusing the conduct of this study is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools understand the New Evangelisation? The

analysis of the data indicates that participants at St John’s have multiple understandings of the New Evangelisation as shown in Table 5.15.

**Table 5.15**

*Case Study Three: How do Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools Understand the New Evangelisation?*

Codes	Emerging Themes	Synthesised Concepts
Build community Passing on Faith Connecting the cultural Catholics to Church Sustainability	Communal Connecting Sustain	Conduits
Creating renewed interest in Faith Deepening the Faith of Catholics Enlivening the whole Church Making Faith relevant Ongoing Provide opportunities	Reinvigorate Relevance Renewal	Restorers

These participants expressed multiple perspectives concerning their understanding of the New Evangelisation. The analysis of these understandings generates the following categorisations of how teachers understand the concept of the New Evangelisation:

The conduits: these teachers understand the New Evangelisation as establishing conduits to connect people to the contemporary Catholic community.

The restorers: these teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the particular mission of the Catholic Church to restore its relevance in the contemporary world.

These two categories illustrate teachers’ understanding of the New Evangelisation at St John’s.

#### *5.4.3.1 The conduits.*

The first category of teachers is the conduits. These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as establishing conduits to connect people to the contemporary Catholic community. They understand that the Church and her agencies, including St John's, employ various means to engage people with the Catholic community. This understanding of the New Evangelisation is threefold.

First, these teachers understand themselves as conduits to the broader Catholic community. They envisage their role as establishing and facilitating a variety of initiatives which enable others to encounter the Catholic Church. For them, the New Evangelisation exists in the various opportunities they employ to communicate the Catholic faith, particularly to those who are cultural Catholics:

But I'd see it [the New Evangelisation] as the way that we're reaching out to people ...who are Catholic...[and]...for whatever reason are cultural Catholics or are becoming cultural Catholics....So, reaching out to try to connect what we do here [at St John's] and then trying to get them to want to belong to a parish is probably, for me, the key of the New Evangelisation. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Second, as conduits, these participants understand the New Evangelisation as enabling the Church to connect to others. These teachers do this by utilising opportunities to involve priests, parish and other Church agencies with their students and the broader St John's community. A number of these teachers are employed at St John's and are parishioners in the local parishes. They understand that they can operate as conduits especially for young people in the school to the parish and vice versa. The multiple connections of one participant illustrate how they understand and enact the New Evangelisation:

My wife and I run a youth group in our parish which is great because a lot of those kids [from St John's parish] then come here [to St John's College]. But it's trying to just develop a place where they're comfortable. It's just fun activities, it's not anything particularly religious, but they like being around the church. The problem is at school we need to constantly push them back to the church as well. So, we're trying to do that. Like we advertise a number of activities that they do in the various parishes. [The Youth Ministry Coordinator] puts around some stuff the other day in my absence for the Antioch group that's happening here at [St John's

Parish]. We often invite their youth minister to come and hang around the school, so that he could engage the kids here, and then can invite them [to the Parish]. The only difficulty with that sometimes is because they're onsite they take over a bit, where we've got four feeder parishes, not one....The other thing is we often have the priests up. We have various priests come in to say Mass [and] we have a back-to-parish thing at the school [where] rather than [students going] to the parishes...on Ash Wednesday, the priests come up and meet with their own parishioners. (FGL7, August 18, 2014)

Finally, these participants understand the New Evangelisation to be about sustaining the Catholic Church into the future. While some indicate they do not agree with the terminology of a New Evangelisation, they believe they have an urgent duty to sustain the Church by enabling young people in particular to become familiar with the contemporary Catholic Church. In doing so, it is their understanding that the New Evangelisation will sustain the Catholic Church into the future:

[The] New Evangelisation is just a name. [It names] an issue that we are constantly reminded of [which is] ...our duty or our obligation to keep the Church alive. To not let the love of God become something trivial that we don't feel we need it in our lives.... [The New Evangelisation is] about teenagers moving away from the Church and trying to hold onto those teenagers. It's also about maybe tapping on the shoulder of someone who used to go to church a long time ago, teenager or not, and say, 'Hey, any chance you want to come back to church and check it out, or say some prayers with us'. (FGT17, August 18, 2014)

#### ***5.4.3.2 The restorers.***

The second category of teachers is the restorers. These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as a strategy to re-establish the relevance of the Catholic faith by reinvigorating Catholic practice and making Catholicism pertinent to others. They believe that contemporary Catholicism is irrelevant to young people. While these participants acknowledge that this is not a new phenomenon, they understand that New Evangelisation demands from them a response to demonstrate that Catholicism may appear relevant to young people:

But that problem [of relevance] has been the same problem all these years. I'm not saying that we give up on it and walk away from it. I'm saying that we do our

best to try to solve that problem. But that problem has been forever, and probably it will continue to be a problem into the future mostly because the Church is always fifty years or one hundred years behind society in its trends and what it accepts and things like that. It's just not cool enough. It's just a bit too old-fashioned, but funnily enough it's the old-fashionedness that I love about it. It's the ritual and the symbol and everything else that means so much to me. It's hard to get that into the hearts and minds genuinely of teenagers. (FGT17, August 18, 2014)

These restorers are challenged by the Church's apparent irrelevance in contemporary society. They indicate as evangelisers the need to be innovative in their approach to restoring the relevance of the Catholic Church, especially in response to contemporary challenges such as "social media" (FGL5, August 18, 2014):

Obviously, we need to be clever in ways that we do that [evangelise]. How do we make religion and our Catholic faith important to our students? How do we make it relevant in their everyday lives? So, I think for me, it's passing on that faith to our future generations. (FGL5, August 18, 2014).

These teachers understand that what is new in the New Evangelisation is contemporary context in which Catholicism is irrelevant to many:

I think that's how I understand it [New Evangelisation]... 'relevant', I think that might be a key word. Making faith relevant for people so they do come back, and they do see a reason to keep their faith and not steer away. As these kids leave school, they might make the decision to leave the church. But I suppose our mission is to instil some kind of relevance of faith. (FGT16, August 18, 2014)

Consequently, they adopt a twofold approach to the New Evangelisation. First, they promote a renewed focus on the message of Jesus, the Good News:

Well it's that push [of] going back to the foundations of the Church [by] being charismatic and spreading the word. [It is] Jesus' mission. It's been that current push since Vatican II to try and get renewed interest in the Church. [Of enabling] people to be not so focussed...on...making money and those type of things. But going back to the roots and remembering the spiritual side, our spiritual needs as well as our emotional needs. (FGT18, August 18, 2014)

Second, they emphasise the need for the Church to be more accommodating to the realities of contemporary family life:

I guess at the same time [the New Evangelisation requires] the Church evolving to cater for the changing needs of family. I think that maybe that's happened in the community [by the school] extending beyond the school walls. That Church community growing. (FGT19, August 18, 2014)

Finally, they perceive a long-term benefit to the Catholic Church of “trying to reinvigorate faith and people returning to the Church rather than being baptised and then not returning” (FGT21, August 18, 2014). The benefit is that future generations might be more engaged with contemporary Catholicism Catholic “rather than just stagnant” members (FGT20, August 18, 2014). In “bringing new life back into the Church” (FGT20, August 18, 2014), these participants are also cognizant of the contemporary challenges that mitigate against this approach (see Section 3.2.2). Further, some of these participants are adamant that any restoration of the Catholic Church will ultimately be dependent on the movement of the Holy Spirit:

I know where it's [the New Evangelisation] coming from. The response [of the New Evangelisation] really was we [the Institutional Church] want to get people back in the Church and let's try and find opportunities to do that. I'm not adverse [*sic*] [to] that, but I think the Holy Spirit moves where the Holy Spirit wishes. You can provide opportunities [but] sometimes there has to be a greater acknowledgement of the movement of people away from Church. We're lucky here [at St John's] in terms of the commitment of many of the families.... We just provide opportunities and allow God to work. It's really up to God, not us. We just provide the opportunities. (FGL7, August 18, 2014)

#### 5.4.4 Case study three: Specific research question three.

The third specific research question structuring the conduct of this study is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools respond to the New Evangelisation? Interviews, transcripts and documents were analysed. Codes were employed tentatively which generated themes and later, synthesised concepts were adopted. This process is summarised in Table 5.16.

**Table 5.16**

*Case Study Three: Research Question Three–Emerging Themes*

Codes	Emerging themes	Concepts
Acceptance of Faith Broad Church connections Parishes Next step in faith Faith in action Formation	Affiliation Whole of Church Formation	Promotion
New initiatives Traditional practices Participation	Innovative practices Traditional practices	Renewal
Structures Subject integration More Catholic Role modelling Personal faith Challenges Common vision Building a Catholic culture	Alignment of structures Alignment of people Critical mass	Integration

A synthesis of codes and themes generated three concepts that explain how teachers respond to the New Evangelisation at St John’s:

1. Promotion
2. Renewal
3. Integration

As with Case Studies One and Two, participants’ lack of consensus concerning how the New Evangelisation is understood influences how they implement it (see Section 5.4.3). Teachers respond to the New Evangelisation according to how they understand it. Table 5.17 illustrates this relationship:

**Table 5.17***Case Study Three: Teachers Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation*

Understandings	Emerging themes	Responses
Conduits	Affiliation Whole of Church Formation	Promotion
Restorers	Innovative practices Traditional practices	Renewal
Conduits Restorers	Alignment of structures Alignment of people Critical mass	Integration

*Note.* The categorisations in Table 5.17 identify the relationship between teachers' understandings of the New Evangelisation and their responses to it.

#### **5.4.4.1 Promotion.**

Some teachers at St John's respond to the New Evangelisation through their promotion of Catholic teachings within the College community. This response is typical of those teachers categorised as conduits (see Section 5.4.3). Many students and staff at St John's are receptive to the opportunities offered to experience contemporary Catholicism. Consequently, these teachers experience the promotion of the Catholic Church as relatively positive and the experiences they promote are generally well-received by the community, as encapsulated by FGL7 in "But what makes a difference [is that] we see a higher take up in terms of some of the things that we offer in comparison to other places that I've been" (FGL7, August 18, 2014).

The promotion of the Catholic Church, as a response to the New Evangelisation, is twofold. First, these participants respond to the New Evangelisation by promoting opportunities for engagement with the local parish. These opportunities create links for staff and students to the Catholic Church beyond St John's and strengthen the relationship of the College to the local parishes:

[We] take every opportunity [we] can try to support them [local parishes]. We'd like more opportunities, but I guess as yet they haven't happened. So, we support whatever's going, where we can support them; but I guess the range of things we support them on still remains limited....It would be good if that could increase. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)



The second category relates to how teachers promote formation opportunities. These teachers believe that while many staff and students may be nominal Catholics, they nevertheless are eager to explore their own faith more maturely. Indeed, because teachers are emphatic that many students “definitely see faith as important” (FGL6, August 18, 2014), they respectfully and diplomatically encourage students on their faith journeys:

...You have kids who are very appreciative of the opportunity to be able to partake in experiences that they probably wouldn't have the opportunity to [do so [elsewhere]]. There are some kids that [*sic*] put their hands up to go these Evangelisation days that [*sic*] aren't your typical kids that [*sic*] wouldn't obviously usually participate in those sorts of things. Then they'll come up to you and say, 'I'm so happy that I went. I got so much out of it.' To be honest even if it's one kid out of 1400, that's enormous. (FGT20, August 18, 2014)

These teachers believe that the promotion of social justice activities is a particularly effective strategy to evangelise. They have experienced an increased emphasis from the College Leadership team on the promotion of these opportunities. As a result, they experience the positive influence of the promotion of these practical, faith-based evangelisation opportunities:

What I notice at our school is there's [*sic*] a lot of opportunities for practical living your faith. So outside of retreats there's [*sic*] catechists for kids to get involved in. There's [*sic*] so many charities. There's the social justice group; and being the leader of that has made me see that kids are just living their faith so frequently through just their willingness to get involved. They're always coming up to me and asking, 'How can we get involved, Miss? We want to help people in this way. What charity can we set up? What meeting can we hold?' There's always something they want to do. So those Gospel values are really coming through I think in...their charitable personality, or whatever you want to call it. (FGT16, August 18, 2014)

#### **5.4.4.2 *Renewal.***

Some teachers respond to the New Evangelisation through the renewal of faith-based practices at the College. These responses are typical of those adopted by restorers (see Section 5.4.3). These are teachers who believe that the New Evangelisation involves demonstrating the contemporary relevance of the Catholic. Their responses are twofold.

First, these teachers seek to reinvigorate Catholic belief and practice by renewing common Catholic practices at the College. These include the provision of prayer and liturgical opportunities such as the Rosary, pilgrimages and weekly Eucharist celebrated at the College. This response also includes the establishment of a school-based St Vincent de Paul program, which offers students opportunities to engage in traditional Australian Catholic social justice networks. While participants emphasised that the influence of these innovations is not measurable, they emphasised their value enthusiastically:

I think it doesn't matter what initiative you have running. I don't think you really need to measure it in terms of how many numbers [of students participate] and that's the measure of your success. If you reach any kid and it's going to be helpful to anyone, it's worthwhile. (FGT21, August 18, 2014)

The effort to revitalise common Catholic practice is particularly evident in the employment of a liturgical music teacher to develop more appealing music for College liturgies and thus encourage greater student participation in College liturgies:

[We take] every opportunity we can to deepen the faith. So, we put 0.4 FTE (full-time equivalent) into a music liturgist. I think she's having some impact at least in trying to get them to sing, particularly in the junior years. So, I think participation to me is part of evangelisation. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Second, these teachers also seek to renew Catholic belief and practice by promoting the relevance of Catholicism to students. This involves the development of new opportunities for students to encounter Catholic belief and practice. Typical of this response is the the creation of the GEL (Giving Evangelisation Life) group at the College:

I've just recently established the GEL team, the G-E-L- comes from 'evanGELisation'...It...is an acronym, and it represents Giving Evangelisation Life. So, let's bring it to life. We [teachers] talk about, we read about evangelisation all the time, [and I thought] let's do something about it. So, this is a really great bunch of kids from Year 10. About a dozen or so. We've had a few lunchtime meetings. We haven't done anything ground-breaking just yet, but lots of ideas and thoughts. What is evangelisation? It's about spreading God's love. It's about making people realise that they are welcome in the church, and to be part of the community, and praise God alongside us. (FGT17, August 18, 2014)

#### ***5.4.4.3 Integration.***

Some teachers respond to the New Evangelisation by integrating New Evangelisation initiatives into daily living at St John's. Thus, Evangelisation rather than being something additional to College life, is integrated and aligned with the school's structures. By attempting to do this, a spiritual culture may influence a critical mass of students and staff (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). Integration, as a response to the New Evangelisation, is identified in three initiatives.

First, teachers respond to the New Evangelisation by ensuring that values honoured in a Catholic culture are integrated into College structures. These structures encompass the daily College routines such as the timetable, and the composition of co-curricular programs. Several participants indicate that Catholic beliefs and practices are integrated into all subject areas. This is important, given the emphasis on academic rigour at St John's. The Principal outlined his understanding of this integration:

So obviously we do place emphasis and the need to maintain that academic rigour in RE (Religious Education). Also, I think there's priority in terms of its [Religious Education's] timetabling....In terms of a classroom level and an RE level, we ensure that every year group is exposed to some forms of faith-building opportunities and...that pretty much starts from Year 7. So, at every meeting we start with prayer [and] every aspect of our camp retreat work program has a spiritual aspect to it...Most teachers would start with prayer in their classroom. There's always...social justice as well, which I think is getting bigger and better. ....I think most staff are on board with that and very supportive of social justice initiatives as well. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

Second, these teachers believe that, in general, College staff are supportive of the ongoing development of Catholic life and practice at St John's. They indicate that in recent years, the College has become more obviously Catholic. They observe the importance of leadership in ensuring that the New Evangelisation continues to be integrated at the College:

I think the other thing about a Catholic school though is: 'Put your money where your mouth is', you know. That's more complex than it seems. What I mean is this sort of thing [the New Evangelisation] has got to be driven from the top. While

people at the CEO and the Archdiocese might talk about this [the New Evangelisation], it really needs to be pushed [by the CEO] with the Principals because there are some great principals who are really on board, and there are others who are not, and it [Principal support] makes a difference. I can see the difference ...I'm aware of there are some other schools, different principals, it [New Evangelisation initiatives] isn't happening in a way. Or deputies for instance [in] the way that some are more onside than others. Some are quite resistant to some of this. Some of this might wreck the timetable. I understand the tensions, but if we don't do this sort of stuff, then we're not just about good discipline, that's not why we exist, and if that's the only reason we exist, we should shut up shop. (FGL7, August 18, 2014)

Participants observed that there is an alignment of their own personal beliefs with those of the school's. Indeed, the school culture energetically encourages faith initiatives. This integration is evident in classroom learning interactions:

It's [St John's] an excellent environment in terms of being able to live your faith on a day-to-day basis with students that [*sic*] are likeminded. [They have the] same sort of faith backgrounds, and particularly because my subject area is totally unrelated to Religious Education, you're still being able to bring that sort of [Catholic] dimension to it. It's not fake. It's just the way that it is. It's just in a natural way. So [from] the questions that the students ask which are triggered by their faith, we can bring that into the classroom and it's an environment where they're not going to feel ridiculed. (FGT18, August 18, 2014)

Clearly, then, participants also experience an alignment of their own beliefs, practices and priorities with that of other staff members. The influence of this integration is demonstrated in the collegiality that exists among teachers:

I feel that everyone's very supportive of each other. Like teachers, but the students as well. I think that we all [have] the common goal that we all realise...we're here for the same purposes. Learning, teaching and I think maybe we're very blessed here. (FGT19, August 18, 2014)

These participants believe their Catholic beliefs and practices contribute to a wholesome caring culture at St John's College, which offers them and their students a meaningful Catholicism:

I think everyone really should be promoting the New Evangelisation and not just the RE teachers or social justice leaders. I think everyone has a role to play. Obviously [in] your general conduct on a day-to-day basis, you're role-modelling. You're modelling...Christian values and so on; but also in the classroom, through what [you] teach...Our students learn so much through role-modelling and, in fact, most of our kids have a fantastic relationship with their teachers and I know that they really take on board and respect our teachers. So, if they see our staff modelling Christian values, I think that that's an important aspect for their own faith development as well. (FGL5, August 18, 2014)

Finally, these teachers respond to the New Evangelisation because their Catholicism is not an add-on to an already crowded educational agenda. It appears that many teachers at St John's demonstrate such authenticity. Consequently, they experience an integration of their personal beliefs and values of the New Evangelisation as it is expressed at the College:

So, I would say the biggest difference for me [when comparing St John's with other Catholic schools] is the synergy [that exists] between our values and our ability to teach those values....You don't have to concern yourself with being worried about not pronouncing your values. You can just enunciate your vision and you can be very clear about those values and basically everyone's on board most of the time. So, there's a clear connection then between what you hold to be true and valuable, what you teach and then what impact you have to make on both the students and their families. So, for me, teaching at a Catholic school has been always very, very rewarding, mainly for those reasons. I think it gives me an opportunity to live out my faith every day. (FGL6, August 18, 2014)

## **Chapter Six**

### **Discussion of New Understandings**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss selected issues generated from the new understandings presented in Chapter Five. While the research has generated several new understandings, there are three specific issues that invite discussion. These are:

1. Teachers in Catholic schools are choosing to offer meaningful spiritual experiences to a disinterested constituency;
2. The New Evangelisation has evolved into a concept with contestable and contrasting understandings; and
3. Implementing the New Evangelisation is an invitation to serve, not an agenda for conversion.

These issues are generated from a synthesis of the new understandings presented in Chapter Five and are tabulated in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1**

*Generation of Issues for Discussion*

Specific Research Question	New understandings from Chapter 5	Issues that structure the discussion with links to Chapter 5	Major issue
<p>How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?</p>	<p>The positive experience of Catholicism (5.2.2.1)</p> <p>The relationship of Catholics with the institutional Church (5.2.2.2)</p> <p>Teachers are increasingly responsible for the expression of contemporary Catholicism (5.2.2.3)</p> <p>The increasing prevalence of cultural Catholics (5.3.2.1)</p> <p>The challenge of connecting to the contemporary Catholic Church (5.3.2.2)</p> <p>Minimal Catholic practice beyond the school (5.4.2.1)</p> <p>Respect and engagement with the Catholic Tradition (5.4.2.2)</p> <p>Catholic schools ensure Catholic practice (5.4.2.3)</p>	<p><b>Teachers experiences of contemporary Catholicism</b></p> <p>Nominal Catholicism (5.3.2.1; 5.4.2.1)</p> <p>The disconnection with Catholic parishes (5.2.2.2; 5.3.2.2; 5.4.2.1)</p> <p>The experience of the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA) (5.2.2.2; 5.3.2.2)</p> <p><b>Offering meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality to the school community.</b></p> <p>Inclusivity (5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.2)</p> <p>Encouraging meaningful Catholic practice (5.2.2.1; 5.2.2.3; 5.3.2.1; 5.4.2.2)</p> <p>The influence of the spiritual traditions (5.2.2.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.4.2.2.)</p> <p>Receptivity to faith and spirituality (5.2.2.1; 5.4.2.1; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3)</p> <p>Teachers’ responsibility for the expression of relevant Catholicism (5.2.2.2; 5.3.2.2; 5.4.2.3)</p>	<p><b>Teachers in Catholic schools are choosing to offer meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality to a disinterested constituency</b></p>

Specific Research Question	New understandings from Chapter 5	Issues that structure the discussion with links to Chapter 5	Major issue
How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?	1.The converters (5.2.3.1) 2.The rejecters (5.2.3.2) 3.The connectors (5.2.3.3) 4.The witnesses (5.2.3.4) 5.The inviters (5.3.3.1) 6.The invigorators (5.3.3.2) 7.The conduits (5.4.3.1) 8.The restorers (5.4.3.2)	<b>The New Evangelisation Contrasting understandings</b> Teachers' multiple understandings of the New Evangelisation Rejection (5.2.3.2) Restoration (5.4.3.2) Conversion (5.2.3.1) Relationships (5.2.3.3; 5.3.3.1; 5.2.4.3) Renewal (5.2.3.3.; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.4.3.1) Witness (5.2.3.4;5.2.4.4) <b>The absence of a common understanding of the New Evangelisation</b>	<b>The New Evangelisation - Contestable and contrasting understandings</b>
How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?	1.Foundations (5.2.4.1) 2.Opportunities (5.2.4.2) 3.Relationships (5.2.4.3) 4.Witness (5.2.4.4) 5.Relational witnessing (5.3.4.1) 6.Inclusion (5.3.4.2) 7.Utilising Church structures (5.3.4.3) 8.Creativity and disruption (5.3.4.4) 9.Promotion (5.4.4.1) Renewal (5.4.4.2) 10.Integration (5.4.4.3)	<b>Teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools</b> Integration (5.2.4.1; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.4.1;5.4.4.2; 5.4.4.3) Opportunities (5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.3.4.4.; 5.4.4.1) Relational Witnessing (5.3.4.3;5.3.4.1; 5.3.4.2) <b>The New Evangelisation as a call to service, not an agenda for conversion.</b>	<b>Implementing the New Evangelisation: A call to service not an agenda for conversion</b>

*Note.* This table illustrates the relationship between the research questions, the new understandings and the issues which have been generated for discussion.

The major issues generated from the analysis of the New Understandings are presented in Table 6.2.



**Table 6.2**

*Structure for the Discussion of the New Understandings*

**6.2 Teachers in Catholic schools are Choosing to Offer Meaningful Experiences of Faith and Spirituality to a Disinterested Constituency**

6.2.1 Teachers experiences of contemporary Catholicism

6.2.2 Offering meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality to the school community.

**6.3 The New Evangelisation – Contestable and Contrasting Understandings**

6.3.1 The contested and contrasting understandings of the New Evangelisation.

6.3.2 The absence of a common, precise understanding of the New Evangelisation.

**6.4 Implementing the New Evangelisation: A Call to Service, not an Agenda for Conversion**

6.4.1 Teachers’ responses to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.

6.4.2 The New Evangelisation as a call to service, not an agenda for conversion.

**6.2 Teachers in Catholic Schools are Choosing to Offer Meaningful Experiences of Faith and Spirituality to a Disinterested Constituency**

The first issue that invites discussion concerns new understandings generated from Research Question One: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?

This issue concerns teachers’ experiences of being Catholic in Australia. The synthesis of New Understandings indicates that participants’ experiences of contemporary Catholicism are influenced by the reality that many students and staff in Catholic secondary schools are disinterested in Catholicism. Nevertheless, these same students and teachers are receptive to engaging in spiritual experiences they find meaningful (Dunn & Piracha, 2015; Frame, 2009). These experiences include opportunities for relevant prayer, projects that support those in need and strategies that challenge the perceived religious complacency of staff and students. Moreover, for many, these school-based experiences are their only engagement with Catholicism. These experiences may also include selected Catholic practices. Consequently, participants prioritise using selected, meaningful spiritual experiences to this constituency. A consequence of this approach is that teachers

and students' experiences of Catholicism in these schools are positive. This issue invites discussion. Two themes structure this discussion. These are:

1. Teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism; and
2. Offering of meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality to the school community.

### **6.2.1 Teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism.**

A characteristic of teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism is that many students and teachers in Catholic secondary schools are disinterested in Catholicism. Three characteristics generated in the analysis of New Understandings illuminate participants' experience of this constituency:

1. Nominal Catholicism;
2. The disconnection of Catholics from Catholic parishes; and
3. The emerging influence of the ARCIRCSA.

#### **6.2.1.1 Nominal Catholicism.**

Many Catholic students and teachers in the schools in this study identify themselves as nominal Catholics. These are baptised Roman Catholics who currently attend Sunday Eucharist occasionally. Their Catholicism has a negligible influence on their living (Stevenson et al., 2010). This phenomenon has been occurring increasingly in Australia since the 1950s, when 74% of Catholics attended Sunday Mass compared to 11.8% in 2016 (PRO, 2019). Thus, nominal Catholicism is multi-generational, with students' grandparents, not their parents, described as the family's primary *faith figures*, (FGL6, August 18, 2014).

The increase in the number of nominal Catholics has been exacerbated by a demonstrable trend of religious disaffiliation among Australians (Hackett et al., 2015a). In 2016, for the first time, there were more Australians who identified themselves as having *No Religion* than there were Catholics. Ironically, *No Religion* is Australia's largest religious group (ABS, 2017c). Indeed, only 22.6% of Australians identify themselves as Roman Catholic. In 1996, 27% did so (PRO, 2019).

The synthesis of New Understanding generates two explanations that have contributed to the increase in the number of nominal Catholics. First, traditional Catholic enculturation influences are no longer an Australian phenomenon (Gascoigne, 2018;

O'Murchú, 2015). Most Catholic students and teachers resemble the rest of the Australian population that is relatively religiously disinterested. Catholics have "... lost a [Catholic] culture" which invites "building...in a different way" (FGL6, August 18, 2014). Previously, Catholic identity was nurtured by the family's relationship with a local Catholic parish community which offered multiple social activities and networks (Feuerherd, 2018). These included Catholic sporting clubs—football, tennis, cricket—and recreational facilities—bushwalkers and theatre groups. Consequently, the local parish became a hub of social life for Catholic families (Bouma, 2006).

This parish dynamic generated a unique Australian Catholic culture. However, in the twenty-first century, Catholics, like other Australians, engage energetically with a secular society (Lynch, 2018). Consequently, most Australian Catholics are "individualised people who construct their personally chosen views and attitudes, not obstructed by any religious affiliation" (Elshof, 2019, p. 263). Since 1980, fewer people are being baptised as Catholics. Indeed, the number of Catholic parishes worldwide has declined. There are fewer priests, Sisters and Brothers. There are fewer Catholics who attend weekly Eucharist or participate in the Sacraments (*Annuario Pontificio*, 2017; Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, 2015). These trends explain the projected increase of religiously unaffiliated people in the developed world (Hackett et al., 2015).

Second, nominal Catholicism reflects "the increasing secularisation of society [that] creates a bit of an obstacle at times [to religious practice]" (FGT15, August 18, 2014). Consequently, many students and "a lot of...teachers are not churched" (IL1, June 4, 2014). This is unsurprising since only 71% of students (Catholic Schools NSW, 2019) and 27% of secondary teachers (NCEC, 2016b) in Catholic schools identify themselves as Roman Catholic. Therefore, participants do not presume that students, families or their colleagues are committed Catholics (Belmonte & Cranston, 2009). Consequently, the increasing trend towards religious disaffiliation and de-identification indicates that Catholicism influences the lives of fewer Australians (Bouma, 2018). Nominal Catholicism is a long-term national and global demographic trend which confirms the tenuous affiliation many Catholics have with the institutional Catholic Church (Dunn & Piracha, 2015; Frame, 2009).

### ***6.2.1.2 The disconnection of Australian Catholics from Catholic parishes.***

Many Catholic students and teachers in this study are disconnected from Catholic parishes. Traditionally, the Catholic parish has been the primary agency for Catholic worship (see 6.2.1.1). Indeed, participating in the Sunday Eucharist, or Mass, and receiving the Sacraments in the Catholic parish defined what constituted a practising Catholic (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2016, No. 2179). As Catholic parish affiliation declines, those who do worship weekly are older, more culturally and linguistically diverse, and predominately female (see Section 2.4). Moreover, given the predominance of nominal Catholicism, the disconnection of Catholic staff and students from parish life is hardly surprising. However, this study identifies three characteristics that describe the relationship of teachers and students in Australian Catholic schools with the Catholic parish.

First, most Catholic students and teachers have “no sense of engagement with the parish [or] the wider church” (IL1, June 4, 2014). Those who do have a parish affiliation generally belong to an ethnic Catholic tradition (Dantis & Reid, 2018). So, while “there are pockets of students who are very traditional...in their faith” (FGL2/3, June 4, 2014), most teachers and students have no engagement with the local parish:

... They might have their licence in their wallet as I say, like their Sacraments of Initiation...Sometimes basically that's even an entrée to Catholic schooling for some of them. But a lot of them...don't see the necessity to be engaged with the Church whilst they consider themselves still part of the Church. So [they are] baptised, they're card-carrying Catholics and it's much the same with our teachers. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

This phenomenon reflects the increasing diversification of religious practice, the disassociation of many Australians from mainstream religious practice and the fact that over half of young Australians reject traditional spirituality and religion (Hall, Nestor, & Sultmann, 2018; McCrindle, 2017; Kenneson, 2015).

Second, the experience of Catholicism in the parish is often uninviting. Compared to the experience in Catholic schools, the supposed “enthusiasm of the teachers [in Catholic schools]...is not matched with the enthusiasm of either your parish priest or your youth group” (FGT8, June 4, 2014). Consequently, participants indicate that:

Trying to get these kids to go to Mass...outside of what's offered at school...[is a] challenge...[as is] Trying to connect them back with their parish outside school, to

have that enthusiasm transfer from what we try [to] provide [for] them here [is a challenge]... We see they're enthusiastic here when they come to retreat, when they go on your camps... But it's transferring that enthusiasm and maybe that drive... outside. It's... a joint role [with parents]. (FGT7, June 4, 2014)

Moreover, while some Catholic families do associate with their local parish, they do so for pragmatic purposes, such as guaranteeing enrolment in a Catholic secondary school. Consequently, while a family's ostensible Catholicity strengthens the enrolment prospects for their children, it does not necessarily indicate the genuineness of family Mass attendance (see Section 5.4.2.2).

This phenomenon describes the selective religious practices and the loose affiliation many Australians have with mainstream churches (Herzog, 2017; Kenneson, 2015). It does not imply the rejection of mainstream religious practice (Davie, 1994, 2007), but rather selective and sometimes pragmatic engagement with parish life. This disconnection of Australian Catholics from Catholic parishes also illustrates the disinterest many Australians have in institutionalised expressions of religion (Ebejer, 2018). Unsurprisingly, some Australian Catholics propose new models of Catholic parishes including those that combine parishes and schools in “new ecclesial communities” (Dantis et al., 2019, pp. 93-94). Research evidence has yet to confirm the reliability of this initiative.

Finally, the disconnection of Catholics from parishes is a concern for some teachers. Considerable efforts occur in Catholic secondary schools, often in cooperation with local Catholic parishes and their priests, to connect staff, students, and their families to Catholic parishes (see Section 5.4.2.2). However, regardless of these initiatives, many students and teachers rarely worship in parishes. Further, even Mass-attending teachers do not regard the Catholic parish as important in their life (PRO, 2015). Moreover, some contend that the school is “becoming the new place of evangelisation because people aren't going to the parish” (FGT6, June 4, 2014). Consequently, the challenge is to identify how to promote a connection with Catholic parishes authentically, when the experience of contemporary Catholicism in these parishes is sometimes uninspiring:

I have an issue with the school becoming the new place of evangelisation because people aren't going to the parish. Read the latest encyclical. If the parishes are warm places of greeting instead of berating, or instead of a desert, then maybe the

kids will see that. Because they come to our school, we encourage participational liturgy; but the place of evangelisation is the home and it's the parish because as soon as kids leave here, they're gone. I mean...we cannot encourage something that they cannot graft onto. If the tree is dead that they go to, then it's a bit unfair on us to water the garden and then put them in the middle of a desert. (FGT6, June 4, 2014)

As well, this complexity is exacerbated further by the recognition that the experience of Catholicism in the Catholic secondary school is finite. Consequently, when students and staff leave Catholic schools, they disassociate entirely from Catholicism.:

When I look ahead for 20 or 30 years...when these... teachers, and they're great teachers, are in the positions of leadership in schools, [I ask myself] "What's the religious leadership going to look like?" So, what role have they got to play? They've got an enormous role. I don't know if a lot of our young staff are regular churchgoers. What does regular mean? I don't mean necessarily every Sunday, but I mean frequently. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

Consequently, as parish affiliation among Australian Catholics continues to decline (Dixon, 2015; PRO, 2015), this study identifies some characteristics that contribute to the disconnection of students and teachers in Catholic schools from Catholic parishes, the comparatively positive experience of Catholicism in Catholic schools and the seeming irrelevancy of Catholic parishes for many.

### ***6.2.1.3 The influence of the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA).***

The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA, 2013–2017) occurred simultaneously with the conduct of this research. Several observations concerning this influence of the ARCIRCSA on teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism are generated from the synthesis of New Understandings.

The tenuous relationship of many Australian Catholics with Catholicism has been compounded by the ARCIRCSA (see Section 3.2.2.1). This is because the prevalence of child sexual abuse within Catholic institutions and the failures in ecclesial responses have undermined the credibility of Australian Catholicism (Doyle, 2017; Timbs, 2016).

Moreover, the reputation of Australian Catholic schools has been damaged by child sexual abuse that occurred in schools which supposedly were expected to care for and protect the young people (McGillion & Grace, 2014; McPhillips 2020). Further, the ARCIRCSA has also compounded the disinterest of many Australian Catholics with contemporary Catholicism and exacerbated the challenge teachers experience of evangelising in a secularised context (Connolly, 2015):

[Catholicism is] a very hard message at times. It's heightened at times when the media's got a real focus on a negative aspect of the Church. Then, too, it feels at times [that] even to speak [about] anything that's connected with [the] Church and ...people's understanding of what Church is...is hard...[Catholicism] has become an even harder story to sell because in the forefront of people's minds are things like the Royal Commission and abuse claims and it keeps bubbling away. (FGL3, June 11, 2014)

Moreover, teachers and school leaders are required to respond to historical incidents of child sexual abuse that occurred in the Catholic secondary school in which they are currently employed (see Section 5.3.2.1). These historical incidents invite teachers and/or school leaders to communicate a cogent and faith-based explanation of a “global criminal phenomenon” (Cahill, 2019, p. 183). Some distinguish between the current school context and the ongoing revelations of historical child sexual abuse. Others contend that the experience of the ARCIRCSA has contributed to further disassociation of Catholics from their Church (see Sections 5.2,2.2, 5.2.4.1, & 5.3.2.1).

However, the cultural trauma associated with institutional child sexual abuse (Blakemore et al., 2017; McPhillips, 2017) identifies the “impact of serious and awful events, which affect community well-being, group identity, social cohesion, and groups safety” (McPhillips 2017, pp. 134-5). While acknowledging the challenges the influence of the ARCIRCSA has on their roles in Catholic schools, some teachers respond to this influence by distinguishing between the mission of Jesus and the Catholic Church (Bevans, 2013). These have “no doubt that Jesus and the Gospels are at the centre” (FGL2, June 11, 2014) of their Catholic school mission. So, while the credibility of the Australian Catholic Church and schools may be undermined because of systemic child abuse and inadequate institutional responses, some teachers on their own initiative, assume evangelising responsibilities:

It's the Jesus story [of] the brokenness and the being beaten and being whipped and whatever. And...the Resurrection, that's the rising. I think it's the same as our church. The humanness of our Church is terrible, absolutely terrible, and soul-destroying. But I think...if we truly believe that the Kingdom of God is on earth then we need to see that in the brokenness. Does that make any sense? So that what we're living through now is the signs of the times. This is the true Vatican II stuff, not the stuff the staff talks about. What we're facing today is the challenge. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

These respond to the challenges of the ARCIRCSA theologically and contend that the influence of the ARCICSA is not only a challenge to contemporary evangelisation, but also an impetus for a renewed approach to Mission in Catholic schools.

### **6.2.2 Offering meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality to the school community.**

While many students and teachers are disinterested in Catholicism, there are other teachers who are committed to offering this constituency selected meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality which are consonant with the Catholic tradition. These teachers believe that students and teachers are receptive to engaging with meaningful, spiritual experiences (Dunn & Piracha, 2015; Frame, 2009). Moreover, for many, these school-based experiences are not only relevant, but also the only opportunity for engagement with Catholic belief and practice. Two issues concerning this phenomenon invite discussion. These are:

1. Teachers' responsibility for the provision of meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality in Australian Catholic secondary schools; and
2. The provision of selected meaningful experiences of Catholic faith and spirituality to a disinterested constituency.

#### ***6.2.2.1 Teachers' responsibility for the provision of meaningful experiences of faith and spirituality in Australian Catholic secondary schools.***

Most participants identify themselves as Roman Catholics. In addition to their employment in an Australian Catholic secondary school, most have been educated in Catholic schools and completed pre-service teacher education in Catholic universities or Catholic teachers' colleges. Further, one-third are leaders in the Catholic Archdiocesan



education system in which they are employed (see Section 5.1). Consequently, many participants exercise varying degrees of responsibility for the religious dimension of their school.

This is a relatively new responsibility for teachers in Catholic schools. With a developing ecclesial understanding and acceptance of the role of the laity since the Second Vatican Council (1961–1965), lay educators are currently responsible for developing Catholic culture in Catholic schools (CCE, 1998, No. 25; McLaughlin, 2008; O'Donoghue, 2017). Moreover, this responsibility has increased because of the decline in ministry participation of clergy and Religious (O'Donoghue, 2017; Singleton, 2014). Further, the Catholic Church's New Evangelisation initiative has amplified these lay responsibilities (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 13). However, the irony is that many teachers are disinterested in or reject such responsibility. There are several reasons for this.

First, the "heavy and increasingly complex workloads" (Gonski et al., 2018, p. 69) identified in the Australian national educational reform agenda deter teachers from active involvement in the religious dimension of Catholic schools (see Section 3.4.2):

...We've got a lot of other things coming at us as well. You've got the national curriculum and the technology. Everybody at this school has moved towards using technology. So, you've got this challenge of taking care of each other [and] taking care of the kids. Part of this evangelisation is about how we do it altogether, and respecting the limitations of people I guess, because you have to be careful [with] levels of anxiety, things like that as well. (FGT7, June 4, 2014)

Moreover, these teachers, like most Australian teachers, prioritise teaching their subject discipline before other duties (Easthope & Easthope, 2000; Johari et al., 2018). Further, the increasing responsibilities for accreditation, compliance and commitment to student wellbeing increase teacher workloads (Bentley, 2017; Klenowski & Wyatt-Smith, 2012). Consequently, many are not inclined to involve themselves actively in various expressions of faith and spirituality in the school:

I also think it has to do with the pressures of the job...these days as well. So, some people might be connected with their faith, but they might be in a stage of their life where they just can't commit to that. And there's so much going on curriculum-wise and pedagogy-wise and all this [so that we have our] fingers in

every pie. But you just don't have the time to devote yourself to [evangelisation] as well as much as you want to. (FGT6, June 4, 2014)

Second, like most of their students, many teachers are disinterested in Catholicism (see Section 6.2.1). The faith-based agenda of the Catholic school seems irrelevant to them (Shields, 2018), a phenomenon that has been exacerbated by ARCIRCSA reports (see Sections 5.2.2.2., 5.3.2.2, & 6.2.1.3). These teachers are not only somewhat religiously illiterate, but not necessarily interested in religion (Dunn & Piracha, 2015; Frame, 2009). Moreover, they lack the knowledge, confidence, willingness and/or ability to integrate religion into their learning and teaching responsibilities (Cloud, 2017; Gleeson & O'Neill, 2017; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016):

There's [sic] a lot of cynical teachers and stuff that you have to compete with...

So, I found that one of my challenges in the role [of Youth Minister] is getting that support from a wide variety of people (FGT8, June 4, 2014),

and...

...We have a lot of staff [whose only] experience with the Catholic Church is what they get at school...But a lot of them...don't see the necessity to be engaged with the Church whilst they consider themselves still part of the Church. So [they are] baptised, they're card-carrying Catholics...I worry more about that [challenge]...when I think [ahead] probably two-or-three-decade's time. I really do. I don't know what it's going to look like then. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

Consequently, the responsibility for the provision of meaningful experiences of Catholic faith and spirituality is the responsibility of a relatively small group of teachers. These teachers include College Youth Ministers or Religious Education Coordinators who promote the religious culture of the school. These have developed a personal faith commitment in which they “try to merge faith with life” (FGT7, June 4, 2014) and respond by animating selective, relevant, and meaningful experiences of Catholic faith and spirituality for the school community.

#### ***6.2.2.2 The provision of selected meaningful experiences Catholic faith and spirituality to a disinterested constituency.***

Some teachers choose to respond to the disinterested constituency in these schools by providing selected, meaningful experiences of Catholic faith and spirituality. These

adopt an inclusive approach to religion. Consequently, regardless of the religious affiliation or practice of students or colleagues, they exercise the “fundamental Gospel imperative” of engaging with all people in the service of God’s mission (O’Murchú, 2015, p. 207). This approach invites discussion.

Regardless of the religious practice or affiliation of others, all students and staff are invited to participate in the schools’ expressions of Catholic faith and spirituality.

I feel like it's through the invitation for families and for students to join with this community and...to live out...in celebrations of the sacraments,...social justice activities,...communal prayer life and...private prayer,...[and] in educating and providing opportunities for them to connect with the wider church through things like World Youth Day or immersion experiences [that we evangelise]. (FGT15, June 11, 2014)

This constituency are offered experiences which “aim to meet people where they are at on their faith journey and make it [Catholic faith and spirituality] relevant to them” (FGT1, June 4, 2014). Consequently, the Catholic school is experienced as:

...extremely welcoming [and] hospitable. There's a primacy about caring for kids and there's a strong commitment to the Church. [This] comes from varied people in the staff...[The school is] a true community where everyone looks after each other [and is] concerned about the wellbeing and the nature of each other, but also with the focus on learning. It's...a learning community first and foremost. The Catholic community sits side by side with that. (IL1, June 11, 2014)

Moreover, these teachers idiosyncratically generate their understanding of a “gentle and genuine” (FGT4, June 4, 2014) presentation of contemporary Catholic faith and spirituality. Such choices demonstrate examples of “recontextualisation” (Durham, 2016; Pollefeyt, 2014). This occurs when Catholic beliefs and practices are reformulated, “so that it makes sense” for another’s “context and world of meaning” (Sharkey, 2019, p. 472). This approach is premised on receptivity to all in the school community (Arbuckle, 2016; Mellor, 2016; Taylor, 2007 ). In addition, there is a prioritising of the context of the other, in contrast to the pursuit of an authorised agenda (Durham, 2016; Pollefeyt, 2014).

A characteristic of this approach is also the integration of relevant Catholic beliefs and values into the school's curriculum, routines and strategic priorities (Gleeson & O'Neill, 2017; Shields, 2018). Some teachers understand that "[the] New Evangelisation is of course about teaching. [It is] not just about going to Mass, [and seeking] forgiveness of sins, [and] all sorts of indoctrinating in the Church" (FGT4, June 4, 2014). Consequently, the experiences they initiate are not necessarily explicitly Catholic because they are planned specifically to address the needs of those who are "not so much connected to church and to church practice" (FGL2, June 4, 2014). These include practices such as charitable fundraising, volunteering programs and retreat programs which reflect a "more...Christian base" (FGL2, June 11, 2014). Such approaches originate from an understanding

...that...(teachers) need to change (their) approach (because) the kids are changing, we're dealing with different children, even to [sic] when we started teaching. They're different children. They're exposed to different things and...we need to present that information [about Catholic faith and spirituality] to them and work out a way to get that fire into them and get them out there doing it (FGT13, June 11, 2014).

Consequently, they also develop creative opportunities that are likely to genuinely engage disinterested teachers and students:

[The New Evangelisation] is about making people feel a bit less [comfortable]....So, it's almost like you've got to lead them to be uncomfortable in order to change them....you have to be clever about leading them to their uncomfortability. (IL2, June 11, 2014)

These also attest that participation in social justice activities is particularly relevant to staff and students (see Section 5.4.2.1). Such opportunities offer increased relevance because "the students...are very connected with the social justice initiatives ...that's how they express their faith here" (FGL2/3, June 4, 2014). These approaches encourage the practice—orthopraxis—rather than a promotion of a theoretical, Catholic belief—orthodoxy (Rohr, 2019). So, while many school community members are not particularly religious, they are receptive to initiatives which promote justice and care for the needy:

There is a longing for the school to be an inspired and sheltering community, precisely because these kinds of communities do not exist outside the school anymore. Looking at it in this way, it is especially due to secularisation that parents and teachers wish for children and themselves to get in touch with a community that is inspired. They long for a place where Catholic spirituality is made visible and where, not the institutional and dogmatic aspects of the Church play a central role, but rather the celebrations, ethics, and community life. (Elshof, 2019, p. 278)

Nevertheless, where appropriate, relationships are cultivated sensitively between Catholic schools, parishes, and other Church agencies. Consequently, Catholic secondary schools:

- cooperate with parish sacramental initiatives;
- engage with parish-based fund-raising initiatives, supporting the poor in developing countries; and
- mentor students to engage in student-led catechesis in local primary schools.

Paradoxically, this cooperation between the Catholic secondary school and the broader Church community contrasts with the increasing disaffiliation and declining religious practice of Australian Catholics (Herzog, 2017; Kenneson, 2015). Indeed, there is no evidence which concludes that students in Catholic schools are attracted to commit themselves to religious practice:

...I think part of the blame [for increasing disaffiliation with Catholic belief and practice] has to fall with the parishes as well. So, I think...you haven't got that same sort of experience on Sunday at the parish [as in the Catholic secondary school]. That [what] you're getting here [at the school], the enthusiasm of the teachers here is not matched with the enthusiasm of either your parish priest or your youth group as well. So short of the school taking over the youth group at every parish....That's the big challenge. (FGT8, June 4, 2014)

In contrast, many Catholic schools are engaging with the spiritual traditions originating from the charisms of the founders of the religious orders of teaching Brothers and Sisters (Cook & Simonds, 2011). These communities record that this development is meaningful and especially spiritual (Cook & Simonds, 2011; Green, 2018):

So, the legacy, I think, of the orders is that we have, as a laity...claimed the charisms and the work of the orders in establishing schools. It is something that we need to claim, continually acclaim and celebrate at the school. I think schools...even when I started teaching...were very Catholic. They were not very piously holy places, but they were unapologetically Catholic. I think there's a greater effort now to actually celebrate the heritage [particularly in] schools...that came from orders.... We really want to hold on to that and keep that alive for the kids. (IL1, June 6, 2014)

In the past, when vowed Sisters, Brothers and priests conducted Catholic schools, the spiritual practices and traditions of the Religious were integral in promoting relevant religious expression (Elvery, 2013; Finn, 2013; Lee, 2015). Two of the three schools in this study were founded by members of a religious order. Only one school has a religious Brother employed on the teaching staff. Yet in all three cases, teachers believe the influence of the spiritual traditions is integral to nurturing the spirituality of staff and students. This phenomenon is identified elsewhere (Elvery, 2013; Finn, 2013; Lee, 2015).

Moreover, the offering of meaningful, selective, and creative approaches to Catholic faith and spirituality invites teachers “to be the Gospel in a clever way” (FGL2, June 11, 2014). Consequently, they not only implement the prescribed religious education curriculum strategically and selectively, but also choose relevant content and strategies deliberately (McCrinkle, 2017; Tacey, 2019), because they understand that many Australians identify themselves as spiritual, while rejecting membership of a religion (Herzog, 2017; Mata-McMahon, 2016). Rejecting the notion of “religious blankness” (Elshof, 2019, p. 265), some religiously unaffiliated pupils are characterised by an appreciation of “Catholic ritual and sacramental repertoire and the value orientation” considering it “to be of potential importance for their personal and social life” (Elshof, 2019, p. 265).

Rather than rejecting Catholic beliefs and practices, teachers report that many students “rise to the (school's) expectations” of engagement with Catholic faith and practice (FGT4, June 6, 2014), remarking that “They're part of the Catholic community and they want to experience what it means to be a Catholic as often as they can, and the challenge is for the school to do that” (FGL2, June 4, 2014). Consequently, those who plan the selective integration of Catholic belief and practice believe their initiative is

authentic evangelisation because they “meet people where they are” (FGT5, June 4, 2014). Moreover, while many school community members remain relatively unaffiliated with Catholicism, they enthusiastically identify themselves as members of these Catholic schools (Lee, 2015). Indeed, they “experience themselves as a self-evident part of an inclusive, meaningful collective” (Elshof, 2019, p. 265).

### **6.3 The New Evangelisation: Contestable and Contrasting Understandings**

The second issue that invites discussion is generated from the synthesis of the new understandings pertaining to Research Question Two: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools understand the New Evangelisation?

The concept of the New Evangelisation entertains multiple understandings. These are illustrated in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3***Teachers' Understanding of the New Evangelisation*

Descriptor	Explanation	Synthesised understanding
The rejecters	These teachers reject the notion of a New Evangelisation, believing that evangelisation has been fundamental to the Christian community since the time of Jesus.	Rejection
The converters	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as contemporary Catholicism's renewed approach to conversion.	Conversion
The restorers	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the mission of the Catholic Church to restore its relevance in the contemporary world.	Restoration
The connectors	These teachers believe the focus of the New Evangelisation is primarily concerned with reconnecting non-practising Catholics with the Church.	Connection
The conduits	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as establishing conduits to connect people to the contemporary Catholic community.	Relationships
The witnesses	These teachers are personally committed Christians who try to live authentically Christian lives. For them, the New Evangelisation is experienced through their Christian witness.	Witness
The invigorators	These teachers understand the aim of the New Evangelisation is to invigorate the faith of baptised Catholics.	Renewal
The inviters	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the invitation to all to encounter God, particularly through the Catholic school community.	Renewal

*Note.* The table illustrates the six distinct understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation generated by interpretations of the responses from teacher participants.



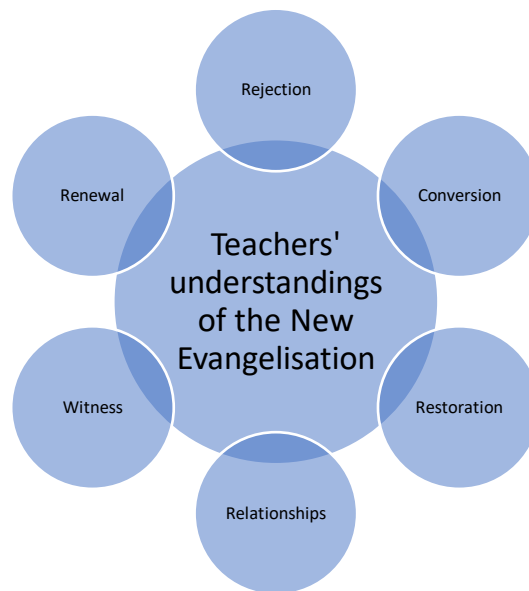
Once similarities are considered, six distinct understanding of the concept of the New Evangelisation are generated. These are:

1. Rejection
2. Conversion
3. Restoration
4. Relationships
5. Renewal
6. Witness

These understandings are represented in Figure 6.1.

**Figure 6.1**

*Teachers' Understandings of the New Evangelisation*



These understandings invite discussion because several are contrasting, and some are contested. Therefore, two specific themes structure this discussion. These are:

1. The contested and contrasting understandings of the New Evangelisation; and
2. The absence of a common, precise understanding of the New Evangelisation.

### **6.3.1 The contested and contrasting understandings of the New Evangelisation.**

The concept of the New Evangelisation originates in Scripture and in the historical, sociological and theological challenges of the twentieth century which the Catholic Church attempted to address through the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, 1962–1965 (see Sections 2.6 & 3.3.3). When this Council considered the relationship between the Catholic Church and contemporary society (Dumais, 2014), ecclesial understandings of the mission of the Church and evangelisation were judiciously reinterpreted:

...the task of evangelising all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church. It is a task and mission which the vast and profound changes of present-day society make all the more urgent. Evangelising is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 14)

Evangelisation and subsequently, the concept of the New Evangelisation, have become the focus of a considerable research (Mellor, 2016). As a result, the Church's understandings of the New Evangelisation are multifaceted, interrelated and contested (Mellor, 2016; Sultmann & Brown, 2014) such that

...[a]ny partial and fragmentary definition which attempts to render the reality of Evangelisation in all its richness, complexity and dynamism does so only at the risk of impoverishing it and even of distorting it. It is impossible to grasp the concept of Evangelisation unless one tries to keep in view all its essential elements. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 17)

The Catholic Church's understanding of the concept of the New Evangelisation has continued to evolve in response to contextual realities and its reconsideration of the nature of contemporary mission (Mellor, 2016). Accordingly, how to implement "evangelisation has remained a constant of theology, since the Second Vatican Council....In a papal sense, what Paul VI foresaw, John Paul II initiated, Benedict XVI institutionalised and Francis embodied" (Mellor, 2016, p. 97).

### ***6.3.3.1 Rejection.***

It is hardly surprising then, that the New Evangelisation is not universally accepted as a valid initiative, because evangelisation is understood as a perennial fundamental Gospel responsibility of all members of the Christian community (Dumais, 2014; Grogan & Kim, 2015). It is not a new obligation.

In addition, some of the enthusiasm for the New Evangelisation appears to be “trying to get people into a particular tradition [in this case, Roman Catholicism]” (FGT4, June 4, 2014). This style reflects the style of fundamentalist American Protestant charismatic preachers (Boguslawski & Martin, 2008a) which “scares people” (FGT4, June 4, 2014).

Consequently, while teachers accept their responsibility to teach their subjects professionally and provide a high quality of duty of care for their students (Gleeson et al., 2018), some ignore or even reject New Evangelisation initiatives. They are not engaging with the religious mission of Catholic education (see Section 3.4.1). Arguably this rejection supposedly challenges the very “nature and purpose of Catholic schools” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 6; Chambers, 2015, p. 57).

### ***6.3.1.2 Conversion.***

In contrast to rejection, the New Evangelisation’s agenda is also understood as conversion. John Paul II (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 38; 2001b, No. 14) initiated this understanding by identifying baptised Catholics who no longer engage with the Church as the focus for reconversion (Brown & O’ Reilly, 2017).

Such an approach appears to be an example of proselytism which is uncommon in Roman Catholicism. Consequently, this strategy is unattractive (see Section 6.3.3.1) because converting is contrary to an invitational, “gentle and genuine” (FGT4, June 4, 2014) approach to encountering “people where they are...on their faith journey and mak[ing] it [Catholicism] relevant to them” (FGT1, June 4, 2014):

The impact of the New Evangelisation on the kids, [is that]...it gives them a really healthy foundation for their life. I have no doubts...that whilst we keep doing the good work in Catholic schools...our kids when they graduate...[or] when they get married and settle down...will still come back to the Church. (IL1, June 4, 2014)

The agenda that the New Evangelisation is primarily concerned with conversion is therefore understandably contested (Tynan, 2013). Teachers, in general, are concerned with establishing quality human relationships which may or may not attract others to choose to engage with Catholic life. This approach appears to generate positive understandings of Catholicism. Consequently, few accept that the purpose of the New Evangelisation is conversion: “It is not by proselytising that the Church grows, but “by attraction” (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 14).

#### ***6.3.1.4 Restoration.***

Surprisingly, in contrast to the New Evangelisation as conversion, there is a minority who claim that the New Evangelisation concerns the restoration of traditional Catholic faith and practices. The rationale for such a perspective is the belief that in times of uncertainty, stability only occurs by a return to traditional orthodoxy (Tickle, 2008). Such an approach generates a strategy to re-assert the supposed relevance of time-honoured practices, many of which were abandoned because of cultural modernity and/or the reforms of the Second Vatican Council (see Section 3.3.3.2).

Moreover, a restorationist view of evangelisation emphasises the integration of traditional Catholic culture into contemporary Catholic schools, especially through the prioritisation of the Catholic Tradition in the Religious Education curriculum. Consequently, the integration of traditional Catholic beliefs and spirituality in Catholic schools, supposedly creates a “synergy between [teachers’] values and [their] ability to teach those values” (FGL6, August 18, 2014). The irony is that a restorationist understanding appears to generate a Catholic culture in contemporary Catholic schools which is more overtly Catholic than it was when the teachers themselves attended Catholic schools (See Section 5.2.2.1, FGT1).

However, this understanding of the New Evangelisation is contested. A restorationist approach to the New Evangelisation is characterised by the reinforcement of dogma and tradition, and a robust public expression of Catholicism (Treston 2018; Faggioli, 2019). Most teachers reject such an understanding, adopting a more pluralist perspective to contemporary evangelisation which encourages engagement with others through recontextualising Catholicism rather than restoring practises and beliefs which are, for many, irrelevant (Durham, 2016). Indeed, reflective educators value the priority of spirituality in relating to mystery (Hall, 2007; see Section 3.3.3.3):

I think the Holy Spirit moves where the Holy Spirit wishes. You can provide opportunities [but] sometimes there has to be a greater acknowledgement of the movement of people away from Church.... We just provide opportunities and allow God to work. It's really up to God, not us. (FGL7, August 18, 2014)

#### ***6.3.1.4 Relationships.***

However, in contrast to those who either reject the concept of the New Evangelisation or adhere to a restorationist agenda, the importance of authentic relationships is understood as the primary agenda for the New Evangelisation (Dumais, 2014).

Evangelisation as relationship has its justification in the Gospel accounts of the early followers of Jesus (John 4:1-42), who having been evangelised through their relationship with Jesus, became themselves evangelisers. Such a perspective prioritises the nurturing of authentic relationships as the foundation of the mission of Jesus: "...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). They understand that "there are moments of evangelising during the day" and "that the day-to-day evangelising that goes on" in Catholic schools is most effective when it originates from authentic relationships (FGL2, June 11, 2014).

This perspective is also confirmed by the Second Vatican Council as the preferable rationale for Catholic evangelisation (Pope Paul VI, 1965d, No. 1). Arguably, this understanding of the New Evangelisation is a realistic and legitimate response to the "growing secularity and indifference" to all things spiritual, especially in developed nations such as Australia (Bevans, 2014b, p. 5). Consequently, in contrast to a conversion agenda, this relational approach to evangelisation is about "being with" people (FGL2, June 11, 2014), establishing quality relationships and then, perhaps, influencing others to engage with Catholic life and practice (Grace, 2018).

#### ***6.3.1.5 Renewal.***

However, in contrast to this relational perspective, the New Evangelisation is understood to be the invigoration of the faith of baptised Catholics through a "new enthusiasm", "a new language", and "new methodologies" underpinned by the vitality of the Good News (Fisichella, 2012, p. 144). This understanding is characterised by a

renewed energy for the proclamation of the Christian message (Green, 2018). It is illustrated in a “profound openness to the place and people, in which and among whom [the Church] work[s]” (Bevans & Tahaafe-Williams, 2012, p. 167):

I think evangelisation is part of who we are as educators....I understand the point that it's new because it's just trying to reinvigorate the sense of the sacred stuff. But as teachers in a Catholic school, part of our role is to evangelise and [Evangelisation is] about transformation of hearts and minds. (FGT15, June 11, 2014)

Consequently, educators understand that their responsibility is to fan “the fire” of faith in the lives of others (FGT14, June 11, 2014). Thus, this “new surge of Gospel energy” (Coleridge, 2013, p. 136) compels them to engage with and respond to the varied circumstances of staff and students as a starting point for evangelisation.

Moreover, as the New Evangelisation is understood as a continuation of the mission of Jesus (FGT12, June 11, 2014), they believe that the purpose of the New Evangelisation is to generate a relevant Church, “to keep the Church alive” (FGT17, August 18, 2014). Thus, the one goal of the New Evangelisation is not “just to provide ... belonging to the school, but also to anchor that [belonging] to the universal faith [of the Church]” (FGT5, June 4, 2014). Consequently, they promote traditional and non-traditional experiences of Catholic faith, practice and spirituality (Tynan, 2013) and seek opportunities to involve priests, parish workers and other Church agencies within school initiatives (see Sections 5.2.3.3, 5.3.3.1, & 5.4.3.1).

Further, in contrast to a restorationist perspective of the New Evangelisation, renewal recognises that “the Church is an evangeliser, but she begins by being evangelised herself” (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 15). This requires a “missionary transformation” (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 11) of the Church itself. As such, this understanding emphasises institutional honesty as the focus of reforms, accepting that the revelations of the ARCIRCSA offer an opportunity for authentic renewal:

I think if we truly believe that the Kingdom of God is on earth, then we need to see the brokenness. Does that make any sense? So, what we're living through now ...is the ‘signs of the times. This is the true Vatican II stuff...What we're facing today is the challenge. (IL2, June 11, 2014)

This perspective emphasises that the New Evangelisation is an expression of authentic contemporary Christian discipleship. Therefore,

...our present experience of shame and guilt because of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Australia may be a good starting point for mission. We have been taken down off our pedestal to need forgiveness and mercy in a way we would never have chosen. Perhaps by knowing the need for mercy we may be better able to show it. It is paradoxical that this may be a better starting point for evangelisation. (Connolly, 2015, p. 400)

#### **6.3.1.6 Witness.**

Finally, the primary agenda of the New Evangelisation is understood as witness. This perspective becomes an expression of personal Christian commitment. Therefore, authentic witness is integral to the understanding of the New Evangelisation (Pope John Paul II, 2001b, No. 33). Consequently, “the Holy Spirit or [teacher’s] own faith is continually challenging [them] to be role models to young people, so that [young people] will then adopt [a Christian] type of lifestyle” (FGT3, June 4, 2014). The New Evangelisation involves living the Gospel faith authentically. Moreover, witness does not entertain an agenda of Church restoration or renewal. Consequently, the New Evangelisation

...means trying to deal with all those things in a student's life and helping them find some sort of formation with their faith as a part of that. [Evangelisation is about] helping kids not so much to come back to the Church, but [in] finding a place in their life for [the] Faith. (FGT8, June 4, 2014)

“Witnesses” are personally committed to Jesus and cultivate a spirituality informed by the values of the Gospel (Grogan & Kim, 2015). They acknowledge that relatively few students or staff share this commitment (FGT3, June 4, 2014). Consequently, they implement the New Evangelisation by living Christian values authentically and, when appropriate, inviting colleagues and students respectfully to share spirituality (FGT4, June 4, 2014). Their understanding of evangelisation is nurtured from personal authenticity. They neither abdicate their responsibility in presenting the Good News, nor are they concerned with conversion. Their witnessing is an expression of their identity. For them, evangelising is not preaching but living authentically. This pragmatic spirituality is particularly relevant for contemporary Christians: “Modern man [*sic*] listens

more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he [*sic*] does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses” (Pope Paul VI, 1975, 41).

If this challenge is to become a reality, then the spiritual formation of teachers is a prerequisite initiative (Gowdie, 2017; NCEC, 2017; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016). However, such an initiative is impeded by the absence of appropriate coordinated processes for staff engagement in or responsibility for the New Evangelisation (FGT9, June 4, 2014). Consequently, the New Evangelisation has become the responsibility of a relatively few committed, often senior leaders “who have chosen specifically to be at a Catholic school...(and) are living their faith” (FGT13, June 4, 2014).

### **6.3.2 The absence of a common, precise understanding of the New Evangelisation.**

The absence of a shared, clear understanding of New Evangelisation is unsurprising, given its contrasting and contested perceptions. However, this is ironic, because the agenda for the New Evangelisation nominates Catholic schools as “centres of the New Evangelisation” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). This suggests a failure by ecclesial and Catholic educational authorities to communicate a cogent understanding of the New Evangelisation effectively to teachers in Catholic schools because

...[a]ny partial and fragmentary definition which attempts to render the reality of Evangelisation in all its richness, complexity and dynamism does so only at the risk of impoverishing it and even of distorting it. It is impossible to grasp the concept of Evangelisation unless one tries to keep in view all its essential elements. (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 17)

In contrast, in other initiatives such as contemporary pedagogy, Catholic schools have agreed understandings of, and approaches to educational priorities (Conway & Andrews, 2016). Likewise, they regularly implement processes for collaborative strategic planning, ongoing school improvement and quality assurance (Turkington et al., 2016). This has not occurred for the New Evangelisation.

The reality is that many teachers neither understand the concept of the New Evangelisation nor accept any responsibility for its implementation. This has become a



challenge to Church and school leaders responsible for its implementation (Mellor, 2016; Sultmann & Brown, 2014).

#### 6.4 Implementing the New Evangelisation: A Call to Service not an Agenda for Conversion

The third issue that invites discussion is generated from the synthesis of the new understandings relating to Research Question Three: How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

Teachers respond to the New Evangelisation according to their individual understanding of the concept. These relationships are illustrated in Table 6.4:

**Table 6.4**

*Teachers' Understanding of and Responses to the New Evangelisation*

Understandings	Themes from Chapter 5	Responses
Rejecters Converters Connectors Witnesses	Sacraments Prayer Teaching Impact	Foundations
Converters Connectors Witnesses	Opportunities Healthy Relevant Lack of Structures	Opportunities
Connectors Witnesses	Relationships Challenges	Relationships
Witnesses	Role Models Witnesses Obstacles	Witness
Inviters Invigorators	Witness Relational	Relational witnessing
Inviters	Communal Inclusion Spiritual	Inclusion
Invigorators Inviters	Relying on the Tradition Organisational structures	Utilising of Church structures
Invigorators	Creativity Disruption	Creativity and disruption
Conduits	Affiliation Whole of Church Formation	Promotion
Restorers	Innovative practices Traditional practices	Renewal
Conduits Restorers	Alignment of structures Alignment of people Critical mass	Integration

Some of the categories of teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation in Table 6.5 are similar, inviting further synthesis. This synthesis is illustrated in Table 6.5:

**Table 6.5**

*Synthesis of Teacher Participants' Responses to the New Evangelisation*

Understandings	Responses	Synthesised Understanding	Link to Chapter 5
Rejecters Converters Connectors Witnesses	Foundations	Integration	5.2.3.3; 5.2.4.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2; 5.4.4.1; 5.4.4.2; 5.4.4.3
Converters Connectors Witnesses	Opportunities	Opportunities	5.2.3.2; 5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.4 5.4.4.1
Connectors Witnesses	Relationships	Relationship	5.2.4.3; 5.3.3.1
Witnesses	Witness	Witness	5.2.3.4; 5.2.4.4; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.1
Inviters Invigorators	Relational witnessing	Witness Relationships	5.2.3.4; 5.2.4.4; 5.3.3.2 5.3.4.1; 5.2.4.3; 5.3.3.1
Inviters	Inclusion	Integration Opportunities	5.2.3.3; 5.2.4.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2; 5.4.4.1; 5.4.4.2; 5.4.4.3; 5.2.3.2; 5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.4; 5.4.4.1
Invigorators Inviters	Utilising Church structures	Integration	5.2.3.3; 5.2.4.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2; 5.4.4.1; 5.4.4.2 5.4.4.3
Invigorators	Creativity and disruption	Opportunities	5.2.3.2; 5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.4; 5.4.4.1
Conduits	Promotion	Opportunities Integration	5.2.3.3; 5.2.4.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2; 5.4.4.1; 5.4.4.2; 5.4.4.3; 5.2.3.2; 5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.4; 5.4.4.1
Restorers	Renewal	Integration Opportunities	5.2.3.3; 5.2.4.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2; 5.4.4.1; 5.4.4.2; 5.4.4.3; 5.2.3.2; 5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.4; 5.4.4.1
Conduits Restorers	Integration	Integration Opportunities	5.2.3.3; 5.2.4.1; 5.3.2.2; 5.3.3.1; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.3; 5.4.2.2; 5.4.2.3; 5.4.3.1; 5.4.3.2; 5.4.4.1; 5.4.4.2; 5.4.4.3; 5.2.3.2; 5.2.4.2; 5.3.4.1; 5.3.3.2; 5.3.4.2; 5.3.4.4; 5.4.4.1

The synthesis of data generates three categories of teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation. These are that teacher participants respond to the New Evangelisation through:

1. The intentional integration of Catholic beliefs and practices into the school culture (integration);
2. The provision of innovative opportunities for all in the school to experience Catholic faith and spirituality (opportunities);
3. Teachers' personal witness in the context of their relationships with others (relational witnessing).

Moreover, the research indicates that teacher participants do not understand the New Evangelisation to be an agenda for conversion. Rather, these teachers are more concerned to respond to the New Evangelisation through service. This issue requires exploration.

#### **6.4.1 Teacher's responses to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.**

The first issue that invites discussion is the synthesised understanding of teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools. This synthesis identifies three distinct responses of teachers to the New Evangelisation. These are:

1. Integration;
2. Opportunities; and
3. Relational witnessing.

##### ***6.4.1.1 Integration.***

Some teachers embrace the New Evangelisation by integrating selective Catholic beliefs and practices intentionally into the school culture. In particular, this approach prioritises the development of cooperative relationships between the school and parish by ensuring that the Eucharist is celebrated in the school. Moreover, by integrating the Catholic Church's liturgical calendar with the College calendar, this approach endeavours to "anchor" (FGT5, June 4, 2014) the Catholic school and its routines into traditional Catholic culture (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 20). Arguably this provision promotes "a synthesis between faith, culture and life" (CCE, 2007). As a result, "the life and activity

in the school [is] the context for a personal encounter with Christ and...promote[s]...a sense of belonging to a wider Church” (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007, p. 13).

However well-intentioned this approach might be, the decline in Australian Catholic affiliation and participation rates in the practice of institutional religion suggests that if the sole purpose of the New Evangelisation is to re-engage Catholics who have lost a “living sense of faith” (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33) with the Church, then such an aim seems unrealistic. Most students and teacher colleagues do not attend parish worship beyond the school (see 6.2.2.2). Australian Catholic affiliation rates are maintained largely by immigrants from non-English speaking backgrounds (Dixon, 2017; PRO, 2019). Moreover, declining worship among Australian-born Catholics may continue to decline with an anticipated rate by 2030 of 5% of Catholics worshipping on Sunday (Catholics For Renewal, 2019; Dixon, 2017).

Moreover, integration is an approach not typically accepted by all teachers. Indeed, the purported ecclesial identity of the Catholic school has a negligible influence on their lives (Boeve, 2007; Byrne, 2005; Gleeson et al., 2016). Further, while teachers are expected to integrate Catholic values and beliefs into the curriculum (D’Orsa, 2013), many lack the knowledge, confidence, or interest to integrate Catholicism into the curriculum (Cloud, 2017; Gleeson & O’Neill, 2017; Neidhart & Lamb, 2016). Consequently, the intentional integration of Catholic faith and spirituality in schools by teachers is sometimes aspirational rather than a reality (see Section 3.4.2.2).

This does not imply that some young people do not enjoy selective Catholic traditions (FGL5, August 18, 2014), but that

there's still that distinction between reverence and participation. That is hard to change, although we're making some progress...But how to get them to want to participate still remains a challenge. (FGL6, August 18, 2014).

Unfortunately, the reality is that many students in Catholic schools “have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel” (Pope John Paul II, 1991, No. 33).

Consequently, reflective teachers regard the New Evangelisation agenda as an authentic nurturing of the humanity of students and colleagues (CCE, 1998). The Catholic

school hopefully is experienced as “a place of integral education of the human person through a clear educational project of which Christ is the foundation, directed at creating a synthesis between faith, culture and life” (CCE, 1998, No. 4).

While traditional Catholic practices or beliefs are honoured, they are not the sole focus of the New Evangelisation agenda. In contrast, for many teachers the New Evangelisation agenda prioritises initiatives pursuing justice, compassion, and a concern for those who are most needy. These teachers seek to develop schools as places of quality learning and teaching which nurture the humanity of young people. Thus, the intentional integration of relevant, selective, and meaningful Catholic faith and spirituality in schools is for many teachers one expression among several approaches of the implementation of the New Evangelisation.

#### ***6.4.1.2 Opportunities.***

In contrast, some teachers respond to the New Evangelisation by offering innovative opportunities to experience contemporary expressions of Catholic faith and spirituality in the school. These opportunities complement traditional experiences, such as social justice programs, national and international immersions, pilgrimages, including World Youth Days and school-based evangelisation opportunities (see Section 5.2.4.2). Many of these opportunities are focussed on nurturing spirituality and promoting Christian service (Fuller, 2001; Hamberg, 2009; Rymarz, 2010b; Tacey, 2003). This approach also includes initiatives that “disturb” the beliefs of staff and students by generating deeper reflections on contemporary issues or matters of faith (FGL2, June 11, 2014). In some cases, these opportunities are student-initiated as “young people are being given the opportunity and the responsibility” (FGT3, June 4, 2014) to present contemporary issues to the College community.

These initiatives originate from teachers’ assessment of needs, rather than from a prescribed Church program because many staff and students are “not...connected to church and to church practice” (FGL2, June 4, 2014). Consequently, these teachers realise it is necessary to “change their approach” to students (FGT13, June 11, 2014). Indeed, inclusivity and creativity characterise these initiatives. They are understood as expressing “the Gospel in a clever way” (FGL2, June 4, 2014). Arguably, these opportunities offer a meaningful alternative to the “widespread malaise and a perceived loss of institutional vitality and direction” (Arbuckle, 2016, p. 56) evident in the Australian Catholic Church.

Moreover, such opportunities address “what is most profound in human beings: their reason for living, that which gives them the possibility of living their humanity in its fullness” (Dumais, 2014, p. 22). It seems that students and staff are positively receptive to these opportunities because they seem to generate a “new enthusiasm” (Fisichella, 2012, p. 144) for the Gospel message.

However, there are challenges with this approach. First, the implementation of the New Evangelisation depends on teachers’ understanding of and commitment to mission (Arbuckle, 2016). Moreover, only 25% of Catholic staff are practising Catholics; one third are non-Catholic (Hall, 2018; NCEC, 2016b). Many of these believe the New Evangelisation is an additional, unnecessary obligation expected of busy educators (FGT2, June 4, 2014). As a result, evangelising opportunities are the responsibility of a small number of teachers who believe evangelisation is an expression of their personal faith, not simply, part of their school duties.

#### ***6.4.1.3 Relational witnessing.***

Finally, evangelisation is understood as an initiative, generated primarily through Christian witness in the context of relationships with others. These teachers experience that “the Holy Spirit or [their] own faith is continually challenging [them] to be role models to young people so that they will then adopt [a Christian] type of lifestyle” (FGT3, June 4, 2014). Thus, the New Evangelisation agenda concerns their authentically living the Christian faith. They seek to live according to their understanding of the Gospel, which influences others to explore spirituality seriously. Re-engagement with being a Catholic is not on the agenda. Therefore, the New Evangelisation is understood and initiated through Christian witnesses (Pope Paul VI, 1975, No. 41).

Further, relational witnessing as a response to the New Evangelisation agenda is characterised by the development of quality relationships, typified by inclusivity and dialogue. The agenda is to “cultivate mutually beneficial relationships” (Bowe, 2009, p. 3) which aim “to meet people where they are at on their faith journey and make it [Faith] relevant to them and acknowledge where they are at” (FGT1, June 4, 2014).

Such an approach is arguably integral to a contemporary response to God’s mission (Bevans, 2011; Connolly, 2015), where “dialogue between the Gospel and culture is an essential component of Christian mission” (Hall, 2007). Moreover, relational witnessing as a process within the New Evangelisation implies that an educational

dynamic is occurring. Consequently, these Catholic educators accept the New Evangelisation as a responsibility of mission, not an extra responsibility because “there are moments of evangelising during the day” and “that the day-to-day evangelising that goes on” at the College is effective when it is generated through authentic relationships (FGL2, June 11, 2014).

#### **6.4.2. The New Evangelisation as a call to service, not an agenda for conversion.**

Finally, many teachers respond to the New Evangelisation as a call to service not an agenda for converting others to Catholicism. This issue requires consideration.

Evangelisation has been historically associated with a conversion agenda for non-Christians in developing countries (Ross, 2013). Some also understand conversion to be the purpose of the New Evangelisation (see Section 3.3.3.1). In contrast, most teachers reject this understanding of the New Evangelisation. They adopt a characteristically “gentle and genuine” approach to evangelisation initiatives (FGT4, June 4, 2014), emulating a style of evangelisation encouraged by Pope Francis:

Instead of seeming to impose new obligations, they should appear as people who wish to share their joy, who point to a horizon of beauty and who invite others to a delicious banquet. It is not by proselytising that the Church grows, but “by attraction”. (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 14)

Consequently, they reject any conversion agenda in their response to the New Evangelisation (Arbuckle, 2016; Mellor, 2016; Taylor, 2007), asserting that

[The New Evangelisation is] not that difficult. It's about affirming staff and students and parents in their own baptismal rite to be the beloved and to be. It's about affirming people, not about telling them they've got to go to Mass or do this and this and this. It's about affirming who they are as sons and daughters of God. (FGL2, June 11, 2014)

Moreover, they respond to the New Evangelisation agenda by “being with” (FGL2, June 11, 2014) others, and providing an integrated, experiential, and relational expression of faith and spirituality in the school context (see Section 6.4.1). It is significant that, despite the diminishing credibility of and affiliation with the institutional Catholic Church (see Sections 3.2.2.1 & 3.2.2.2), they remain relatively committed to

their service of others and their personal devotion to Christian discipleship (FGL2, June 11, 2014). They distinguish between the mission of Jesus and the Church as an agency for Mission, recognising that “missionary outreach is paradigmatic for all the Church’s activity” (Pope Francis, 2013, Nos. 14, 15) and “from this flows an obligation to evangelise, not as an act of proselytisation but as one of service” (Rymarz, 2010a, p. 46).

Consequently, because of the approach of these teachers, Catholic schools are experienced as “more open...to society than to the religious tradition they come from” (Elshof, 2015, p. 16). They are experienced as unique places for the formation of others within a community and through a spirituality that is life-giving and counter-cultural (Elshof, 2015) and offer an integral education of the human person thus “creating a synthesis between faith, culture and life” (CCE, 1998, No. 4).



## Chapter Seven

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this chapter is to present the conclusions and recommendations generated from this research which explores how teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation.

#### 7.1 Research Design

A synthesis of the literature (Chapter Three) generated three specific research questions which structured the conduct of the research process:

- How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?
- How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?
- How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools?

Symbolic interactionism is the theoretical perspective chosen for this research, as it complements both the constructionist epistemology and the case study methodology adopted for this research. This perspective suggests that meaning is constructed by individuals in their interaction with others primarily by using symbols derived from the culture (O'Donoghue, 2018). Moreover, symbolic interactionism asserts that “human beings attach their own meaning to things” (O'Donoghue, 2018, p. 19) arising from social interactions. People thus learn how to make sense of their world in their interactions with others and by using symbols, particularly language. This perspective guides the researcher as it provides a theoretical perspective based on the theory that individuals within their social world negotiate meaning (Stake, 2004). This theoretical perspective is relevant for this study as teachers interact with others in their school context and beyond, and these interactions shape their understandings of the New Evangelisation and its subsequent implementation in schools.

Case study is the methodology adopted for this study. A case study approach offers an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon within a defined context or bounded system (Merriam, 1998). The participants in this research are teachers in three Catholic secondary schools in an Australian metropolitan city. The largest three schools were chosen for the multi-site case study as this allows for a manageable documentary analysis

and a more purposeful selection of teacher participants from within a relatively large and diverse regional context (Yin, 2009). The data collection strategies include semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence. Twenty-seven teachers and school leaders volunteered as participants and a total of 9 focus groups and 2 individual interviews were conducted in these case studies (see Appendix K). The data gathering processes, selection of participants and the conduct of this research honoured the ethical standards required by the ACU Research and Ethics Committee (see Appendix A) and the Catholic Education Office Sydney which administers the Catholic schools in the region (see Appendix B).

## **7.2 Limitations of the Research**

This research is limited by the nature of the responses of the respondents. The use of multiple strategies of data collection seeks to offer every opportunity for participants to engage comfortably in the research at times and in ways that respect their personal integrity, professional commitments and local circumstances. Regular peer reviews during the period of data gathering and analysis ensured that responses and scenarios that might have arisen or those initially beyond the researcher's control could be addressed ethically, confidentially and professionally.

Processes to protect participants and to ensure the reliability and truthfulness of the research have been respected (see Sections 4.4–4.6). The purposive selection of participants was to ensure that those involved could contribute effectively to the research in question. While this delimitation was deliberate, its purpose is to ensure that the research is trustworthy.

## **7.3 New Understandings Concerning the Specific Research Questions**

The research identifies several new understandings generated from the synthesis of data concerning the three specific research questions.

### **7.3.1. Specific research question one.**

The first specific research question is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the contemporary expression of Catholicism?

The research generates three new understandings concerning teachers' experiences of the contemporary expression of Catholicism.

The first new understanding concerns teachers' general experiences of Catholicism. Teacher participants' experiences of Roman Catholicism are characterised by increasing disaffiliation, disconnection from the local Church, especially the local parish, and declining adherence to Roman Catholic beliefs and practices. These phenomena confirm Australian and international research (see Sections 2.4 & 2.5). In addition, they have been influenced by the findings generated by the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse (ARCICSA). Consequently, nominal Catholicism, intermittent worship and a tenuous relationship with the institutional Catholic Church characterises much of the experience of contemporary Catholicism for teacher participants.

In contrast, the second new understanding concerns the contemporary expressions of Catholicism in Australian Catholic secondary schools which are characterised by inclusivity, innovation and engagement with selective, meaningful and relevant Catholic practices and beliefs. Further, given the significant proportion of non-Catholics and nominal Catholics in these schools (Catholic Schools NSW, 2019), the primary experience of contemporary Catholicism for most staff, students and families is in Catholic schools. Moreover, the contemporary expressions of Catholicism experienced in these schools are regarded positively and engaged in respectfully by staff, students and the broader community.

The third new understanding concerns teachers' responsibilities for the meaningful expression of Catholicism in Australian Catholic secondary schools. The research indicates that increasingly, teachers in these schools are responsible for offering meaningful and engaging expressions of Catholicism to a somewhat disinterested and largely nominal Catholic constituency. Moreover, many teachers experience this responsibility as an additional expectation on themselves as educators in Catholic schools.

### **7.3.2 Specific research question two.**

The second specific research question is: How do teachers understand the New Evangelisation?

The research generates four new understandings concerning teachers' understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation.

The first new understanding generated by the research is that teacher participants hold multiple understandings of what constitutes a definition of the New Evangelisation. These understandings are illustrated in Table 7.1.

**Table 7.1**

*Teachers' Understanding of the New Evangelisation*

Descriptor	Understanding
The rejecters	These teachers reject the concept of a New Evangelisation. They believe that evangelisation has been fundamental to the Christian community since the time of Jesus. For them, there is nothing new in Evangelisation.
The converters	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as contemporary Catholicism's renewed approach to conversion.
The restorers	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the mission of the Catholic Church to restore its relevance in the contemporary world.
The connectors	These teachers believe the New Evangelisation's primary focus is the reconnection of non-practising Catholics with the Church.
The conduits	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the establishment of conduits to connect people to the contemporary Catholic community.
The witnesses	These teachers are personally committed Christians who try to live authentic lives which honour honesty, caring, service, respect and commitment to those who are in need. The New Evangelisation for them is their Christian witness.
The invigorators	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as a mission of the contemporary Catholic Church to invigorate the faith of baptised Catholics.
The inviters	These teachers understand the New Evangelisation as the invitation to all to encounter God, particularly through the Catholic community.

*Note.* This table illustrates the teacher participants' range of understandings of the term, New Evangelisation.

These understandings illustrate that teacher participants engage with multiple, individual, disparate and at times contradictory understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation.

The second new understanding is that, while many participants believe that some ecclesial and Catholic education authorities understand the agenda of the New Evangelisation as conversion, most teachers reject any proselytising agendas.

The third new understanding is that teachers' multiple interpretations of the New Evangelisation reflect the dynamic and contested ecclesial understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation. Predictably, teachers' perceptions of the New Evangelisation reflect this complexity. Therefore, while ecclesial authorities may enunciate the rich and dynamic nature of the evangelisation (Francis I, 2013; John Paul II, 1991; Paul VI, 1975, No. 17), teacher participants adhere to individual and at times conflicting interpretations of the concept of the New Evangelisation.

The fourth new understanding is that there is not a common understanding of the New Evangelisation shared by teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools. This absence is concerning, particularly in light of the supposed centrality of the New Evangelisation to the very "nature and purpose of Catholic schools" (Chambers, 2015, p. 186) as centres of the New Evangelisation (Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory, 2007). Moreover, the absence of a collective understanding of the concept of the New Evangelisation is an anomaly in the contemporary Australian educational context. This is because most Australian Catholic schools consistently generate successful, whole-school, agreed understandings of and approaches to other priorities, such as what would constitute quality contemporary pedagogy (Conway & Andrews, 2016) and strategies which promote ongoing school improvement and quality assurance (Turkington, Ghantous, & Crook, 2016).

### **7.3.3 Specific research question three.**

The third specific research question is: How do teachers respond to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools?

The research generates three new understandings concerning teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation.

The first new understanding generated in the research is that teacher participants have demonstrated multiple responses to the New Evangelisation. These eleven categories of responses are illustrated in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.2***Teachers' Responses to the New Evangelisation*

Responses	Explanation
Foundations	The integration of Catholic traditions, values, practices and beliefs into the school.
Opportunities	The provision of evangelisation opportunities and experiences, additional to foundational practices, both within and beyond the school context (e.g., social justice outreach and immersions).
Relationships	The quality of the relationships and care of others as a response of teachers' personal Faith and by extension, the New Evangelisation.
Witness	The response to the New Evangelisation through Christian witness and role-modelling.
Relational witnessing	The influence of Christian witness embedded in authentic relationships as a response to the New Evangelisation.
Inclusion	The ensuring of inclusion of all members of the College community in Catholic life and practice
Utilising of Church structures	The utilising of Church structures that emanate from the parish and broader Church to engage others with the Catholic community and institutional Church.
Creativity and disruption	The provision of creative and challenging opportunities to express contemporary Catholicism and disturb the inherent complacency of nominal Catholics.
Promotion	The promotion of Catholic Church teachings within the school community
Renewal	The renewal of faith-based and relevant expressions of the Catholic tradition.
Integration	The integration of Catholic practices, beliefs and structures into the schools.

These responses illustrate the multiple, individual and at times conflicting responses to the New Evangelisation identified by teacher participants.

The second new understanding is that teachers respond to the New Evangelisation according to their individual understandings of the concept (see Sections 5.2.4, 5.3.4 & 5.4.4). These responses are not mutually exclusive because teachers adopt multiple responses to the New Evangelisation. Indeed, the lack of consensus concerning how the concept of the New Evangelisation is defined is a reason there are multiple and at times conflicting categories of responses. Thus, the research identifies a clear relationship between teachers' understanding of the New Evangelisation and their response to it.

The third new understanding indicates that some teachers reject any responsibility for the New Evangelisation. These teachers include those who might not be Catholic, those who reject an understanding that there is anything new in contemporary evangelisation, as well as those who understand that their role as teachers in Catholic schools is essentially to teach their subject discipline in accord with national curriculum obligations. Consequently, the study indicates that a proportion of teachers reject any responsibility for implementing the New Evangelisation.

#### **7.4 Conclusions of the Research**

This research generates eight conclusions relating to new knowledge, policy and practice.

##### **7.4.1 Contributions to new knowledge.**

There are four conclusions that contribute to new knowledge.

##### ***7.4.1.1. Teachers experience of contemporary Catholicism.***

The first conclusion generated in this research is that teachers distinguish between the experience of contemporary Catholicism within the Catholic secondary school and the experience of Catholicism in parishes and the institutional Catholic Church. This study concludes that teacher participants experience positively the contemporary expressions of Catholicism in Australian Catholic secondary schools. This positive experience is characterised by inclusivity, innovation, diversity and authenticity. In contrast, many teacher participants perceive these as lacking in Catholic parishes. Moreover, Catholic schools are burgeoning and popular (Franchi & Rymarz, 2017). Given the positive experience of Catholicism in these schools, most students and staff identify enthusiastically with Catholic schools and engage with the contemporary expression of Catholicism offered in these schools.

In contrast, increasing disinterest and disaffiliation of many students and staff from Catholic parishes and the institutional Catholic Church is confirmed by the study. This conclusion is consistent with international and Australian research in Roman Catholic affiliation and practice (*Annuario Pontificio*, 2017; Bellofatto & Johnson, 2013; Dunn & Piracha, 2015; PRO, 2019).

#### ***7.4.1.2 Catholic schools ensure Catholic practice for many Australian Catholics.***

This research concludes that Catholic schools ensure appropriate expressions of Catholic practice for staff and students. Currently, few Catholic staff members and students worship regularly in Catholic parishes. This study confirms that the absence of traditional Catholic inculturation practices, the competing demands on the time of students, teachers and families, and the perceived irrelevancy and incredibility of many Catholic beliefs and teachings to some teachers and students contribute to the loose affiliation of many Australian Catholics with Catholic belief and practice.

This study concludes also that for many Australian Catholics, the Catholic school is the only community in which they worship. Despite this phenomenon, however, considerable efforts occur in Catholic secondary schools—often in cooperation with local Catholic parishes and their priests—to connect staff, students and their families to Catholic parishes (see Section 5.4.2.2). However, regardless of these initiatives, many students, staff and families in Catholic schools rarely worship in parishes. Consequently, this study concludes that Catholic schools deliberately offer to their constituencies meaningful expressions of spirituality and worship.

#### ***7.4.1.3. The influence of the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCICSA).***

The third conclusion generated in this research concerns the influence of the ARCICSA on teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools. The ARCICSA occurred simultaneously with the conduct of this research. The credibility and relevance of the Australian Catholic Church has been challenged by the ARCICSA findings, which identify a sustained history of widespread child sexual abuse within Australian Catholic schools and deliberate cover-up when complaints occurred (Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, 2017; Doyle, 2017). The



study concludes that the influence of the ARCIRCSA on teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools is twofold.

First, the ARCIRCSA has exacerbated the disinterest in, if not rejection of Catholicism by many Catholic students, families and staff. Moreover, the prevalence of child sexual abuse within Catholic institutions and the failures of the Church to respond adequately have undermined, for many, the credibility of Catholicism in Australia.

Second, the study concludes that the ARCIRCSA has exacerbated the challenges which teachers experience concerning evangelising in a secular context. The ARCIRCSA has presented a particular challenge to the New Evangelisation because the credibility and relevance of the Australian Catholic Church has been undermined by its revelations. This study indicates that teacher and/or school leader participants have been required to communicate a cogent and faith-based explanation of a “global criminal phenomenon” (Cahill, 2019, p. 183). This has had a deleterious influence on teacher participants’ motivation to promote the New Evangelisation.

#### ***7.4.1.4 The New Evangelisation is problematic and rejected by some teachers.***

The fourth conclusion concerns how the New Evangelisation is problematic for teachers who are charged with its implementation. There are three reasons for this. First, for many participants, the term evangelisation is associated with a proselytising agenda, perceived to convert religiously uninvolved staff or students or disaffiliated Catholics to become practising Catholics. While this agenda is rejected by most teachers, the term New Evangelisation continues to have this negative connotation. Consequently, some teachers reject any responsibility for its promotion. Second, some teacher participants reject the New Evangelisation because they believe that there is no new evangelisation, as evangelisation has been the fundamental responsibility of the Christian community since the time of Jesus. Third, some teachers reject any engagement with the New Evangelisation agenda because they insist that their primary responsibility as teachers in Catholic schools is to teach their subject discipline while demonstrably addressing national curriculum obligations and providing a high duty of care for students. Consequently, this study concludes that because many teachers experience the concept of the New Evangelisation as problematic, they reject any responsibility for its implementation.

#### **7.4.2. Contributions to policy.**

There are two conclusions that contribute to policy.

##### ***7.4.2.1 The definition and purpose of the New Evangelisation.***

The first conclusion contributing to policy concerns teacher participants' understandings of the definition and purpose of the New Evangelisation. The conclusions are twofold. First, this study concludes that teacher participants exhibit contestable and contrasting understandings of the concept of the New Evangelisation. The study generates six distinctive themes which illustrate teachers' understandings of the New Evangelisation. These comprise rejection, conversion, restoration, connection, witness and renewal (see Section 6.3).

Second, because there is a lack of a universally agreed understanding of what constitutes the meaning and purpose of the New Evangelisation, this study concludes that teachers respond to the New Evangelisation according to their personal understanding of it.

##### ***7.4.2.2. Impediments to the implementation of the New Evangelisation.***

This conclusion concerns the impediments to the implementation of the New Evangelisation identified in this study. Teachers are disposed positively towards the religious dimension of Australian Catholic schools, supporting the faith integration, daily prayer, liturgies and Christian service typical of these schools. Further, in comparison to other Church agencies, Catholic schools are well-resourced and staffed by many teachers and leaders who are well-qualified and able to lead Catholic education professionally. However, this study concludes that there are significant challenges to the ecclesial aspiration for Catholic schools to be centres of the New Evangelisation. The study concludes that there are five distinct issues which mitigate against Australian Catholic secondary schools' implementation of the New Evangelisation. These are:

###### ***7.4.2.2.1 Definition and purpose.***

First, the absence of a common, precise definition of or purpose for the New Evangelisation for teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools mitigates against a unified approach to the implementation of the New Evangelisation in these schools (see Section 7.4.2.1). Teacher participants either reject the concept of the New Evangelisation or adhere to contrasting and conflicting individual understandings of the concept. The

study concludes that the absence of a common, precise definition of the New Evangelisation generates multiple, disparate perceptions of the purpose of the New Evangelisation. This explains the existence of diverse and, at times, conflicting approaches to the implementation of the New Evangelisation.

#### *7.4.2.2.2 Relevance.*

Second, the study confirms that Catholicism is becoming increasingly irrelevant to many teachers and students in Australian Catholic secondary schools. Teacher participants report that some teachers reject the moral and religious teachings of the Church because of their perceived irrelevancy in their lives. However, the Church and Catholic education authorities continue to reaffirm the faith-based purpose of Catholic schools. Consequently, the agenda of the New Evangelisation is impeded by the increasing irrelevance of Catholicism to many staff and students in Catholic schools.

#### *7.4.2.2.3 Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse (ARCIRCSA).*

Third, the influence of the ARCIRCSA and its revelations of widespread incidences of historical child sexual abuse as well as the inadequate responses of the institutional Church are an impediment to the New Evangelisation agenda (see Section 7.4.1.3). The study concludes that the Catholic Church's diminished credibility is an impediment to the implementation of the New Evangelisation in Catholic secondary schools.

#### *7.4.2.2.4 Teachers.*

Fourth, despite the commitment of many Catholic teachers, there are other teachers who have a tenuous relationship with Catholicism (see Section 3.2.2). In fact, many teachers in Catholic secondary schools are disconnected from parish life and sacramental practice and may not even be Catholic (see Section 4.4.2.1). It could be that these teachers' spirituality and religious practice limit their ability to strengthen and articulate Catholic identity in Australian Catholic schools. Nevertheless, regardless of their religious affiliation, teachers are expected to support Catholic beliefs and practices. The paradox of this expectation is that the effectiveness of the implementation of the New Evangelisation depends on lay teachers and their commitment to and understanding of the Mission of God and the role of the Catholic Church in this Mission.

This study concludes that some teachers—non-practising Catholics, non-Catholics and unchurched teachers—reject any responsibility for maintaining the Catholicity of Australian Catholic secondary schools. For these teachers, the faith-based purpose of the Catholic school is either irrelevant or not understood. It seems that some teachers, like their students, are disinterested in Catholicism. Clearly, they are not engaged in the New Evangelisation.

#### *7.4.2.2.5 The limited influence of Catholic education.*

Finally, an impediment to the New Evangelisation is the limited influence of Catholic education. The Catholic school is not only the primary experience of contemporary Catholicism but for many, the only experience. Moreover, most participants contend that beyond the Catholic school, many Australian Catholics have little association with Roman Catholicism. Further, despite the range of experiences, efforts and resources directed to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools, the study indicates that many teachers do not engage with Catholicism in any regular or concerted fashion. Thus, many New Evangelisation initiatives are confined to those who teach and are educated in Catholic schools.

### **7.4.3 Contributions to practice.**

There are two conclusions that contribute to practice.

#### *7.4.3.1. Responses to the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.*

The study concludes that teachers implement the New Evangelisation according to their individual understandings of what constitutes the New Evangelisation. Since teachers do not share an agreed purpose for the New Evangelisation (see Section 7.4.2.1), they have multiple and at times conflicting responses to it. However, the synthesised understanding of teachers' responses to the New Evangelisation identifies three distinct themes as responses to the New Evangelisation, namely: integration; opportunities; and relational witnessing. These three distinct approaches are integral to the teachers' implementation of the New Evangelisation.

#### *7.4.3.2 Responsibility of a small group of teachers for the implementation of the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.*

Finally, this study concludes that a relatively small number of teachers are responsible for the implementation of the New Evangelisation. These teachers have an official responsibility for nurturing the school's Catholicity (e.g., Principal, Leaders of Religious Education or Mission). The number includes also teachers who are personally committed to contemporary Catholic life and/or the New Evangelisation.

This research concludes, however, that many teachers are not committed to implementing the New Evangelisation. This is not only because these teachers lack an understanding of the meaning and purpose of the New Evangelisation but also because there is an absence of a consistent understanding of teachers' responsibilities for implementing the New Evangelisation. Moreover, some teachers are not Catholics. Further, while some Catholic teachers themselves require ongoing formation to engage professionally with New Evangelisation implementation, others believe they are not responsible for the evangelisation of others.

## **7.5 Recommendations**

The conclusions of this research emanate from teachers' experiences of contemporary Catholicism and their understanding of and responses to the concept of the New Evangelisation. There are nine recommendations which address the conclusions generated in this study. The links between these recommendations and the discussion from which they were developed are illustrated in Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3**

*Links between Chapters 5, 6, and 7 and the key Recommendations for Policy and Practice in Catholic Secondary Schools Regarding the New Evangelisation*

Key words	Links to Chapters 5, 6, 7	Recommendation
Definition	6.3.1, 6.3.2; 7.4.1.4, 7.4.2.1., 7.4.2.2	Policy 1
Aims	6.2, 6.2.1.1, 6.2.1.2, 6.2.1., 6.2.2. 6.3.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.1.4, 7.4.2.1., 7.4.2.2	Policy 2
Principles/Framework	6.2, 6.2.1.1, 6.2.1.2, 6.2.1., 6.2.2. 6.3.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.1.4, 7.4.2.1., 7.4.2.2, 7.4.3.1, 7.4.3.2	Policy 3
Formation	5.2.2.2-3, 5.3.3.1-2, 5.4.3.1-2, 6.3.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.1.3, 7.4.3.2	Policy 4
Positive experience of Catholicism in schools	5.2.2.1, 5.4.2.2-3, 6.2; 7.4.4.1, 7.4.4.2	Practice 1
School evangelisation strategies and practices	5.2.4.1-4, 5.3.4.1-4, 5.4.4.1, 6.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.4.1, 7.4.4.2, 7.4.3.2	Practice 2
Evangelisation plans	5.2.2.2, 5.2.3.2, 5.3.2.1-2, 5.4.2.1, 6.2, 6.2.1.1, 6.2.1.2, 6.2.1., 6.2.2., 6.3.1. 6.3.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.1.4, 7.4. 2.1., 7.4.2.2. 7.4.1.3, 7.4.3.2	Practice 3
Characteristics of teacher evangelisers	5.2.2.2-4, 5.3.3.1-2, 5.4.3.1-2, 6.3.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.1.3, 7.4.3.2	Practice 4
Impediments	5.2.2.2, 5.2.3.2, 5.3.2.1-2, 5.4.2.1, 6.2, 6.2.1.1, 6.2.1.2, 6.2.1., 6.2.2., 6.3.1. 6.3.2, 6.4.1-2; 7.4.1.4, 7.4.2.1., 7.4.2.2. 7.4.1.3, 7.4.3.2	Practice 5

*Note.* This table shows the connection between the discussion of data about the New Evangelisation examined in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 and the key recommendations concerning policy and practice.

### **7.5.1 Policy.**

The recommendations concerning policy are that Catholic ecclesial and education authorities:

1. engage teachers and school leaders in the development of a common and precise definition of the concept of the New Evangelisation applicable to Australian Catholic secondary schools.
2. engage teachers and school leaders in the development of a clear definition of the contextualised aims of the New Evangelisation in Australian Catholic secondary schools.
3. develop principles of the New Evangelisation to assist teachers and school leaders in its implementation.
4. prioritise and provide opportunities for the initial and ongoing formation of teachers and school leaders as evangelisers.

### **7.5.2 Practice.**

The recommendations concerning practice are that Catholic educational authorities and school leaders:

1. identify the positive experiences of Catholicism in Australian Catholic secondary schools. Further, that these experiences be promoted among Catholic schools, Catholic educational systems and in the broader Catholic community.
2. identify the effective evangelisation strategies and practices in Australian Catholic secondary schools. Further, that these experiences be promoted among Catholic schools, Catholic educational systems and with the broader Catholic community.
3. develop contextualised evangelisation plans for Australian Catholic secondary schools which:
  - a. define the school's agreed, contextualised understanding of the New Evangelisation;
  - b. define the school's agreed, contextualised aims for the evangelisation of students and staff;
  - c. identify the responsibilities of teachers in the implementation of the New Evangelisation;

- d. identify the professional development requirements of teachers and leaders;
  - e. identify the resource allocation requirements, including staffing requirements, for the implementation of evangelisation plans;
  - f. identify the various constituencies which are the focus of the evangelisation responses in Catholic schools and that evangelisation strategies appropriate to these constituencies are developed. These constituencies include, but are not limited to nominal Catholics, non-Catholics, disinterested Catholics, and practising Catholics.
4. identify the characteristics of effective teacher evangelisers in Australian Catholic secondary schools in order to assist in the formation of teachers as evangelisers.
  5. identify and strategically address the impediments to contemporary evangelisation that exist in Australian Catholic Secondary schools.

The major research question for this study asked: How do teachers in Australian Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelisation? This study has generated insights and conclusions concerning teachers' experiences of the New Evangelisation in the context of the Australian Catholic secondary school. The complexity of understanding and responding to the imperative of the New Evangelisation by teachers in these schools has been identified. Recommendations have been generated in this research which aim to enhance the provision and quality of contemporary evangelisation in Catholic schools. Overwhelmingly, this research affirms the commitment of the many teachers in Australian Catholic schools who endeavour authentically to "make the Kingdom of God present in this world" (Pope Francis, 2013, No. 176).



## References

- Adams, J., Cochrane, M., & Dunne, L. (2012). *Applying theory to educational research: An introductory approach to case studies*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Allen, J. L. (2009). *The future church: How ten trends are revolutionizing the Catholic Church*. New York, NY: Doubleday.
- Amaladoss, M. (1997). Integral evangelisation: Pre-synodal reflections. *Vidyajyoti*, 61(4)  
Retrieved from <https://sedosmission.org/old/eng/amaladoss.htm>
- Amaladoss, M. (2012). A call to continuing dialogue: The Second Vatican Council 50 years after. *Vidyajyoti*, 76(10), 734–738.
- Anderson, D. L., & Graham, A. P. (2016). Improving student wellbeing: Having a say at school. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 27(3), 348–366.  
doi:10.1080/09243453.2015.1084336
- Anfara, V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. *Educational Researcher*, 31(7), 28–38.
- Annuario Pontificio*. (2017). Vatican: Vatican Publishing House. (SKU) 9788820999759
- Arbuckle, G. (2013). *Catholic identity or identities?: Refounding ministries in chaotic times*: Collegeville, MI: Liturgical Press.
- Arbuckle, G. (2016). *Intentional faith communities in Catholic education: Challenge and response*. Strathfield, Australia: St. Pauls.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017a). *Census of population and housing*. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/2024.0>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017b). *Religion in Australia*. Cat. No. 20171.0.  
Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Religion%20Article~80>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017c). *Religion in Australia: 2016 Census Data Summary*. Cat. No. 2071.0. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Religion%20Data%20Summary~70>

- Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). (2019a). *My School*. Retrieved from <https://www.myschool.edu.au/>
- Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). (2019b). *NAPLAN*. Retrieved from <https://www.acara.edu.au/assessment/online-assessment>
- Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). (2011). *Australian professional standards for teachers*. Retrieved from <https://www.aitsl.edu.au/teach/standards>
- Bache, I., Reardon, L., & Anand, P. (2016). Wellbeing as a wicked problem: Navigating the arguments for the role of government. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 17(3), 893–912.
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case study research in educational settings*. Buckingham, United Kingdom: Open University Press.
- Beaton, R. (2019). Between the center and the margins: Young Catholics, “sorta-catholics,” and baptismal identity. *Religions*, 10(9), 512.
- Bellofatto, G. A., & Johnson, T. M. (2013). Key findings of Christianity in its global context, 1970–2020. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 37(3), 157. doi:10.1177/239693931303700307
- Belmonte, A., & Cranston, N. (2009). The religious dimension of lay leadership in Catholic schools: Preserving Catholic culture in an era of change. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 12(3), 294-319.
- Benjamin, A. (2010). Faithful to uncertainty: Catholic schools and an evangelisation of hope for the poorest. *International Studies in Education*, 2(2), 148–162. doi:10.1080/19422539.2010.504020
- Bentley, T. & Clifton Savage, G. (Eds.). (2017). *Educating Australia: Challenges for the decade ahead*. Carlton, Australia: Melbourne University.
- Bessant, B. (1984). Free, compulsory, and secular education: The 1872 Education Act, Victoria, Australia. *Paedagogica Historica, International Journal of the History of Education*, 24(1), 5–25.
- Bevans, S. (2009). Church teaching on mission. In S. Bevans & J. Gros (Eds.), *Evangelization and religious freedom: Ad gentes, Dignitas humanae*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.
- Bevans, S. (2011). *Prophetic dialogue: Reflections on Christian mission today*. New York: NY: Orbis.

- Bevans, S. (2013). Revisiting mission at Vatican II: Theology and practice for today's missionary church. *Theological Studies*, 74(2), 261–283.  
doi:10.1177/004056391307400201
- Bevans, S. (2014a). The apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* on the proclamation of the gospel in today's world: Implications and prospects. *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, 103(2), 297–308. doi:10.1111/irom.12064
- Bevans, S. (2014b). New evangelization or missionary church? *Evangelii gaudium* and the call for missionary discipleship. *Verbum SVD*, 55(2–3), 158–176.
- Bevans, S. (2018). Pope Francis's missiology of attraction. *International Bulletin of Mission Research*, 43(1), 20–28.
- Bevans, S., & Tahaafe-Williams, K. (2012). *Contextual theology for the twenty-first century*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: James Clarke.
- Bielenberg, A. (Ed.) (2014). *The Irish Diaspora* [ebook]. Routledge.
- Blakemore, T., Herbert, L. H., Arney, F., & Parkinson, S. (2017). The impacts of institutional child sexual abuse: A rapid review of the evidence. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 74(December), 35–48.
- Boeve, L. (2007). *God interrupts history: Theology in a time of upheaval*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Boguslawski, S., & Martin, R. (2008). *The new evangelization: Overcoming the obstacles*. New York, NY: Paulist Press.
- Bouma, G. (2006). *Australian soul: Religion and spirituality in the twenty-first century*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: University Press.
- Bouma, G. (2011). *Being faithful in diversity: Religions and social policy in multifaith society*. Hindmarsh, Australia: ATF Press.
- Bouma, G. (Producer). (2018, June 28). *Religion in Australia: What are the implications of 'None' being the new normal?* Melbourne, Australia: Australian Broadcasting Commission. Retrieved from <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2018/06/28/4863516.htm>
- Bowe, L. (2009). *Teacher leaders' perceptions of relational influence: A phenomenological study*. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from Electronic Theses and Dissertations. 2567. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/etd/2567>

- Brown, C., & O' Reilly, K. (2017). John Paul II and the new evangelization. *Heythrop Journal*, 58(6), 917–930. doi:10.1111/heyj.12131
- Byrne, D. J. (2005). *The understandings of Catholic lay secondary teachers on the nature and purpose of Catholic schooling* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia).
- Cahill, D. P. (2019). The impact of international reports on the Australian royal commission's report into institutional responses to child sexual abuse with regard to the Catholic church. *Journal for the Academic Study of Religion*, 31(3), 165–185. Retrieved from <https://journals.equinoxpub.com/JASR/article/viewFile/37597/36517>
- Cahill, D. P., & Wilkinson, P. (2017). *Child sexual abuse in the Catholic church: An interpretive review of the literature and public inquiry reports*. Melbourne, Australia: School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University. Retrieved from <https://www.rmit.edu.au/content/dam/rmit/documents/news/church-abuse/child-sex-abuse-and-the-catholic-church.pdf>
- Caprile, G. (1974, settembre 27–ottobre 26). Il sinodo dei vescovi: Terza assemblea generale. Edizioni *La Civiltà Cattolica*.
- Casanova, J. (2006). Rethinking secularization: A global comparative perspective. *The Hedgehog Review*, 8(1/2), 7–22. Retrieved from [http://www.iasc-culture.org/HHR\\_Archives/AfterSecularization/8.12CCasanova.pdf](http://www.iasc-culture.org/HHR_Archives/AfterSecularization/8.12CCasanova.pdf)
- Casanova, J. (2018). Globalizing catholicism and the return to a “universal” church. In S. Hoerber Rudolph & J. Piscatori, *Transnational religion and fading states*, (pp. 121–143). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Casson, A. (2018). Catholic identities in Catholic schools: Fragmentation and bricolage. In S. Whittle (ed.). *Researching Catholic education*, (pp. 57–70). Singapore: Springer.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church*. (2016, Rev. ed.). London, United Kingdom: Catholic Truth Society.
- [Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. \(2017\). Catholic Education Commission NSW \(CEC\). Retrieved from https://www.sydneycatholic.org/directory/listing/catholic-education-commission-nsw-cec](https://www.sydneycatholic.org/directory/listing/catholic-education-commission-nsw-cec)

- Catholic Bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. (2007). *Catholic schools at a crossroads: Pastoral letter of the bishops of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory*. Sydney, Australia: Author, with assistance from Catholic Education Office, Sydney.
- Catholic Education Commission New South Wales. (2011). *Statistics 2010 extracts: NSW Catholic schools*. Retrieved from Sydney: [www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au](http://www.cecnsw.catholic.edu.au)
- Catholic Education Office, Sydney. (2012a). *Enrolment policy for systemic Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney*. Sydney, Australia: Author.
- Catholic Education Office Sydney. (2012 b). The Archbishop's charter for Catholic schools. Retrieved from <http://www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au>.
- Catholic Schools NSW. (2019). *The case for Catholic schools*. Sydney, Australia: Author. Retrieved from [https://csnsw.azurewebsites.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CSNSW\\_The-Case-For-Catholic-Schools-Volume-1\\_HR\\_FINAL.pdf](https://csnsw.azurewebsites.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CSNSW_The-Case-For-Catholic-Schools-Volume-1_HR_FINAL.pdf)
- Catholics For Renewal. (2019). *Getting back on mission: Reforming our church together*. Mulgrave, Australia: Garratt.
- Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). (2015). *Global Catholicism: Trends & forecasts*. Washington, WA: Author. Retrieved from <https://cara.georgetown.edu/staff/webpages/Global%20Catholicism%20Release.pdf>
- Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA). (2016). *Frequently requested church statistics* (Website). Washington, WA: Author. Retrieved from <https://cara.georgetown.edu/frequently-requested-church-statistics/>
- Chambers, M. (2015). 'An especially delicate task': The place of students who are not Catholics in catholic schools in Australia (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Brisbane, Australia). Retrieved from <https://researchbank.acu.edu.au/theses/521/>
- Clifford, C. (2015). Pope Francis' call for the conversion of the church in our time. *Australian e-Journal of Theology*, 22(1), 33–55. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.acu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=102386169&site=ehost-live>
- Clinton, J., Dinham, S., Savage, G., Aston, R., Dabrowski, A., Gullickson, A., . . . Arbour, G. (2015). *Evaluation of the implementation of the Australian*

- Professional Standards for Teachers: Final report*. Melbourne, Australia: Centre for Program Evaluation, The University of Melbourne. Retrieved from <https://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/bitstream/handle/11343/129501/2015%20Clinton%20et%20al%20-%20Evaluation%20of%20the%20Implementation%20of%20the%20%20Australia%20Professional%20Standards%20for%20Teachers.pdf?sequence=1>
- Cloud, N. (2017). Teaching in Catholic schools from the perspectives of lay teachers, 1940–1980. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 44, 70.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2002). *Research methods in education*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). Research methods in education (6th ed.). In Australian Catholic University, *Data gathering strategies*. Retrieved from <http://leocontent.acu.edu.au/integ/gen/fd83808e-a064-a652-c19f-ea4e4c954eab/1/treenav.jsp?token=9200249VS%3AACUIDGeneric%3A1338099300000%3AuLjmRBsuo4CQCR%2BBoqNftw%3D%3D>
- Coleridge, M. (2013). A different fire: Vatican II and new evangelization. *Pacifica*, 26(2), 123–133.
- Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). (1977). The Catholic school. In A. Flannery, (Ed.), *The Vatican collection Volume 2, Vatican II: More post-conciliar documents*, (pp. 606–629). Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press.
- Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). (1982). Lay Catholics in schools: Witnesses to faith. In A. Flannery, (Ed.), *The Vatican collection Volume 2, Vatican II: More post-conciliar documents*, (pp. 630–661). Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press.
- Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). (1988). *The religious dimension of education in a Catholic school: Guidelines for reflection and renewal*. London, United Kingdom: Catholic Truth Society.
- Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). (1998). *The Catholic school on the threshold of the third millennium*. Homebush, Australia: St Pauls.
- Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). (2007). *Educating together in Catholic schools: A shared mission between consecrated persons and the lay faithful* (Australian ed.). Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls.

- Congregation for Catholic Education (CCE). (2014). *Educating today and tomorrow: A renewing passion*. Retrieved from [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc\\_con\\_catheduc\\_doc\\_20140407\\_educare-oggi-e-domani\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_catheduc_doc_20140407_educare-oggi-e-domani_en.html)
- Connolly, N. (2015). *Ad gentes to Evangelii gaudium: Mission's move to the centre*. *Australasian Catholic Record*, 92(4), 387–402. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.acu.edu.au/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=112467238&site=ehost-live>
- Conway, J. M., & Andrews, D. (2016). A school wide approach to leading pedagogical enhancement: An Australian perspective. *Journal of Educational Change*, 17(1), 115–139.
- Cook, T., & Simonds, T. (2011). The charism of 21st-century catholic schools: Building a culture of relationships. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 14(3).
- Cooke, B. (1983) Sacraments and sacramentality. Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications.
- Coughlan, P. (2009). *The mission of the catholic school and role of the principal in a changing catholic landscape*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a95f054c680e>
- Council of Australian Governments (COAG). (2018). *National school reform agreement*. Retrieved from [http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/national\\_agreements/past/national-education-agreement.pdf](http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/national_agreements/past/national-education-agreement.pdf)
- Council of Australian Governments (COAG). (2019). *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) education declaration*. Carlton South, Australia: Education Services Australia. Retrieved from [https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/pdf\\_accessible\\_-\\_alice\\_springs\\_mparntwe\\_education\\_declaration\\_acc\\_002.pdf](https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/pdf_accessible_-_alice_springs_mparntwe_education_declaration_acc_002.pdf)
- Creswell, J. W. (2008). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. New Jersey, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design* (3rd ed.). Lincoln, NE: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*: Lincoln, NE: Sage.



- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sydney, Australia: Allen and Unwin.
- D'Orsa, J., & D'Orsa, T. (2011). *Explorers, guides and meaning makers: Mission theology for Catholic educators*. Sydney, Australia: Garratt.
- D'Orsa, T. (2013). Catholic curriculum: Re-framing the conversation. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 5(1), 68–2. doi:10.1080/19422539.2012.754589
- Dantis, T., Bowell, P., Reid, S., & Dudfield, L. (2019). *Listen to what the spirit is saying: Final report for the plenary council phase I: Listening and dialogue*. Retrieved from <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/reports/>
- Dantis, T., & Reid, S. (2018). *Called to fullness of life and love: National report on the Australian Catholic Bishops' Youth Survey 2017*. Canberra, Australia: Pastoral Research Office, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. Retrieved from <https://www.catholic.org.au/images/youthsurvey/300718/ACBC%20Youth%20Survey%20Report.pdf>
- Darlaston-Jones, D. (2007). Making connections: The relationship between epistemology and research methods. *The Australian Community Psychologist*, 19(1), 19–27. Retrieved from [http://leocontent.acu.edu.au/file/02da2bb0-61f9-87dc-595f-497df7d5eaf6/1/epistemology\\_and\\_methods.pdf](http://leocontent.acu.edu.au/file/02da2bb0-61f9-87dc-595f-497df7d5eaf6/1/epistemology_and_methods.pdf)
- Davie, G. (1994). *Religion in Britain since 1945: Believing without belonging*. Oxford, United Kingdom: Blackwell.
- Davie, G. (2007). *The sociology of religion*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.
- Dees, J. (2016). *To heal, proclaim, and teach: The essential guide to ministry in today's Catholic church*. Notre Dame, IN: Ave Maria Press.
- Degenhardt, L., & Duignan, P. (2010). *Dancing on a shifting carpet: Reinventing traditional schooling for the 21st century*. Camberwell, Australia: ACER Press.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2000). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- De Thomasis, L. (2012). Unravelling the church's quandry before the quandry unravels the church. In L. De Thomasis, *Flying in the face of tradition: Listening to the experience of the faithful* (pp. 9–14). Chicago, IL: ACTA.
- Dinham, S. (2016). *Leading learning and teaching*. Camberwell, Australia: ACER Press, an imprint of Australian Council for Educational Research.



- Dixon, R. (2013). What do mass attenders believe? *Australasian Catholic Record*, 90(4), 439–458. Retrieved from <https://login.ezproxy1.acu.edu.au/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=92895771&site=ehost-live>
- Dixon, R. (2015, June). *Australian Catholics in changing times: Learning from the Australian Census and the National Church Life Survey*. Paper presented at the Voicing the Vision Conference, Australian Catholic University, Sydney, Australia.
- Dixon, R. (2017). The Australian church in 2030—What the research predicts. *St Thomas More Forum*. Retrieved from <https://www.catholicsforrenewal.org/videos.htm>
- Dixon, R., Bond, S., Engebretson, K., Rymarz, R., Cussen, B., & Wright, K. (2007). *Catholics who have stopped attending Mass* (ISBN 978-1-86420-281-6). Fitzroy, Australia: National Centre for Pastoral Research. Retrieved from <http://www.pro.catholic.org.au/pdf/DCReport.pdf>
- Dixon, R., Hughes, P. J. & Australia. Bureau of Immigration, Multicultural and Population Research. (1996). *The Catholics in Australia*. Canberra, Australia: Australian Govt. Pub. Service.
- Dixon, R., Hughes, P. J. & Christian Research Association. (2005). *The Catholic community in Australia*. Adelaide, Australia: Openbook.
- Dixon, R., McMahon, J., Reid, S., Keryk, G., & Atapattu, A. (2017). *Our work matters: Catholic church employers and employees in Australia*. Fitzroy, Australia: Pastoral Research Office, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. Retrieved from <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/our-work-matters-catholic-church-employers-and-employees-in-australia/>
- Dixon, R., & Reid, S. (2013a). The contemporary Catholic community: A view from the 2011 Census. *The Australasian Catholic Record*, 90(2), 131–146.
- Dixon, R., & Reid, S. (2013b). *Pastoral challenges to the family: Research results for the Australian Catholic community*. A report to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in preparation for the 2014 Extraordinary Synod on the family. Fitzroy, Australia: Pastoral Research Office, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.
- Dixon, R., Reid, S., & Chee, M. (2013). *Mass attendance in Australia: A critical moment*. A report based on the national count of attendance, the National Church Life

- Survey and the Australian Census. Fitzroy, Australia: Pastoral Research Office, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.
- Dormor, D., & Harris, A. (2016). *Evangelii gaudium* and the renewal of the church. *Ecclesiology*, 12, 3–11.
- Dowling, A., Beavis, A., Underwood, C., Sadeghi, R., & O'Malley, K. (2009). *Who's coming to school today? Final report*. Brisbane, Australia: ACER, Brisbane Catholic Education.
- Doyle, T. P. (2017). The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Roman Catholic Church. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 74, 103–106.
- Dulles, A. (2002). *Models of the church* (Expanded ed.). New York, NY: Image, Doubleday.
- Dumais, M. (2014). *After Emmaus: Biblical models for the new evangelization*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Dunn, K. M., & Piracha, A. (2015). The multifaith city in an era of post-secularism: The complicated geographies of Christians, non-Christians and non-faithful across Sydney, Australia. In S. Brunn (Ed.), *The changing world religion map* (pp. 1635-1654). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Durham, D. (2016). *Keeping schools Catholic: Discipleship as paradigm for administrators, teachers, staff and students*. (Doctoral dissertation 2795, Loyola University, Chicago). Retrieved from [https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc\\_diss/2795](https://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_diss/2795)
- Dye, J., Schatz, I., Rosenberg, B., & Coleman, S. (2000). Constant comparison method: A kaleidoscope of data. *Practising Qualitative Research*, 4(1–2).
- Easthope, C., & Easthope, G. (2000). Intensification, extension and complexity of teachers' workload. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 21(1), 43–58. doi:10.1080/01425690095153
- Ebejer, S. (2018). *The changing face of Australia: From secular to post-secular identity*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Notre Dame, Sydney, Australia). Retrieved from <https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/216>
- Edwards, B. (1999, November). *Inside the whale: Deep insider research*. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference, Melbourne. Retrieved from <https://www.aare.edu.au/data/publications/1999/edw99006.pdf>

- Elshof, T. (2015). Catholic schools and the embodiment of religiosity: The development of catholicity toward the common good. *Religious Education, 110*(2), 150–161.
- Elshof, T. (2017). Religious teachers and students about biblical teaching and discipleship: An account of a recent exploration. In B. Koet and A. Van Wieringen (Eds.), *Multiple teachers and disciples* (225–237). Leuven, Belgium: Peeters.
- Elshof, T. (2019). The challenge of religious education to deal with past and present Catholicism. *British Journal of Religious Education, 41*(3), 261–271.
- Elvery, J. M. (2013). *Understanding and implementing the Marist charism from the middle: The experience of middle leaders in a Marist school* (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a963365c68b0>
- Faggioli, M. (2019, January 8). A church within the church: Behind the new integralism is the old intransigentism. *Commonweal*. Retrieved from <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/church-within-church>
- Family and Community Development Committee. (2013). *Betrayal of trust: Inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other non-government organisations*. East Melbourne, Australia: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/article/1788>
- Feuerherd, P. (2018, Jul 12). As traditional parishes decline, 'personal parishes' find new interest. *National Catholic Reporter Online*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncronline.org/news/parish/traditional-parishes-decline-personal-parishes-find-new-interest>
- Finn, C. F. (2013). *An exploration of how identity leaders perceive and institutionalise the Edmund Rice charism*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a963119c68a4>
- Fisichella, R. (2012). *The new evangelization: Responding to the challenge of indifference* (G. J. Woodall, Trans.). Balwyn, Australia: Freedom.
- Flannery, A. (1987). *Vatican Council II: The conciliar and post-conciliar documents* (Vol. 1). New York, NY: Costello.
- Flynn, M. (1993). *The culture of Catholic schools*. Homebush, Australia: St Pauls.
- Flynn, M. & Mok, M. (2002). *Catholic schools 2000: A longitudinal study of Year 12 students in Catholic schools*. Sydney, Australia: Catholic Education Commission.

- Flyvberg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(3), 219–245. Retrieved from <http://online.sagepub.com>
- Frame, T. (2009). *Losing my religion: Unbelief in Australia*. Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.
- Franchi, L., & Rymarz, R. (2017). The education and formation of teachers for Catholic schools: Responding to changed cultural contexts. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 9(1), 2–16. doi:10.1080/19422539.2017.1286905
- Freeman Catholic College. (2017). *Annual report to the school community*. Retrieved from <http://www.freemanbonnyrigg.catholic.edu.au/Exam%20Data/Annual%20Report%202017.pdf>
- Fuller, R. C. (2001). *Spiritual, but not religious: Understanding unchurched America*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Furness, G. & Stewart, A. (2015, December 7). *Public hearing into various institutions run by catholic church authorities in and around Ballarat: Case study 28*. Opening address by senior counsel assisting. Ballarat, Australia: Royal Commission Into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Retrieved from <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/Case%20Study%2028%20-%20Opening%20address%20-%20Catholic%20Church%20authorities%20in%20Ballarat%20-%20Melbourne%20-%20007122015.pdf>
- Gascoigne, R. (2018). The mystical and the political: Challenges for the Australian Catholic church. *The Australasian Catholic Record*, 95(1), 20–24.
- Gill, J. (2004). *Beyond the great divide: Single sex or coeducation?* Sydney, Australia: University of New South Wales Press.
- Gleeson, J. (2015). Critical challenges and dilemmas for Catholic education leadership internationally. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 7(2), 145–161.
- Gleeson, J. (2017). *Identity and curriculum in Catholic education: Survey of teachers' opinions regarding certain aspects of Catholic Education* (Draft). Retrieved from [http://www.acu.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/802378/draft\\_teacher\\_report.pdf](http://www.acu.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/802378/draft_teacher_report.pdf)

- Gleeson, J., & Flaherty, J. (2016). The teacher as moral educator: Comparative study of secondary teachers in Catholic schools in Australia and Ireland. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 55, 45–56. doi:10.1016/j.tate.2015.12.002
- Gleeson, J., O’Gorman, J., Goldberg, P., & O’Neill, M. (2018). The characteristics of Catholic schools: Comparative perspectives from the USA and Queensland, Australia. *Journal of Catholic Education* 21(2) 75–106.
- Gleeson, J., O’Gorman, J., & O’Neill, M. (2018). The identity of Catholic schools as seen by teachers in Catholic schools in Queensland. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 10(1), 44–65.
- Gleeson, J., & O’Neill, M. (2017). Curriculum, culture, and Catholic education: A Queensland perspective. *Curriculum Perspectives*, 37(2), 121–133.
- Goetz, J., & LeCompte, M. (1984). *Ethnography and qualitative design in educational design*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Gonski, D., Arcus, T., Boston, K., Gould, V., Johnson, W., O’Brien, L., . . . Roberts, M. (2018). *Through growth to achievement: The report of the review to achieve educational excellence in Australian schools*. Retrieved from <https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/through-growth-achievement-report-review-achieve-educational-excellence-australian-0>
- Gowdie, J. D. (2011). *Meaning and mission: Exploring a contemporary approach to spiritual formation for Catholic school educators*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a961094c6857>
- Gowdie, J. D. (2017). *Stirring the soul of Catholic education: Formation for mission*. Mulgrave, Australia: Vaughan.
- Grace, G. (2002). *Catholic schools: Mission, markets, and morality*. Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Grace, G. (2018). New thinking, new scholarship and new research in Catholic education: Some perspectives on this field of study. In S. Whittle (Ed.), *Researching Catholic education: Contemporary perspectives* (pp. 15–30). Singapore: Springer Singapore.
- Graham, A., Phelps, R., Maddison, C., & Fitzgerald, R. (2011). Supporting children's mental health in schools: Teacher views. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 17(4), 479–496. doi:10.1080/13540602.2011.580525

- Green, M. (2018). *Now with enthusiasm: Charism, God's mission and Catholic schools today*. Mulgrave, Australia: Vaughan.
- Grogan, P., & Kim, K. (2015). *The new evangelization: Faith, people, context and practice*. London, United Kingdom: Bloomsbury T&T Clark.
- Guba, E., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). *Competing paradigms in qualitative research* (Vol. 6). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hackett, C., Stonawski, M., Potancokova, M., Grim, B., & Skirbekk, V. (2015). The future size of religiously affiliated and unaffiliated populations. *Demographic Research*, 32(1), 829–842. doi:10.4054/DemRes.2015.32.27
- Hajkowicz, S., Cook, H., & Littleboy, A. (2012). *Our future world: Global megatrends that will change the way we live*. Clayton, Australia: CSIRO, Australia.
- Halafoff, A., & Gobey, L. (2018). “Whatever”? Religion, youth, and identity in 21st century Australia. In P. Gareau, S. Bullivant, and P. Beyer (Eds.), *Youth, religion, and identity in a globalizing context: International perspectives* (pp. 255–277). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.  
DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004388055\\_014](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004388055_014)
- Hall, D., Nestor, D., & Sultmann, W. (2018). *Formation for mission: A systems model for advancing the formation of the Catholic school educator within the Australian context*. Sydney, Australia: La Salle Academy, Australian Catholic University.
- Hall, G. (2007). Christian mission today. *Compass Theology Review*, 41(3). Retrieved from <http://compassreview.org/spring07/2.html>
- Hamberg, E. (2009). Unchurched spirituality. In P. Clarke (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of the sociology of religion*. Oxford, United Kingdom: University Press.  
doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199588961.013.0042
- Harris, P., Chinnappan, M., Castleton, G., Carter, J., De Courcy, M., & Barnett, J. (2013). Impact and consequence of Australia's National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN): Using research evidence to inform improvement. *TESOL in Context*, 23(1/2), 30.
- Hattie, J. (2012). *Visible learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Hermelink, J. (2011). *Churched/unchurched*. Religion Past and Present. Retrieved from [https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/religion-past-and-present/\\*-COM\\_11794](https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/religion-past-and-present/*-COM_11794)

- Herzog, P. S. (2017). Youth and emerging adults: The changing contexts of faith and giving. *Religions*, 8(7), 124. doi:10.3390/rel8070124
- Hewitt-Taylor, J. (2001). Use of constant comparative analysis in qualitative research. *Nursing standard*, 15(42), 39–42.
- Hilton, M. E. (1998). *Sharing the spirit: Transmission of charism by religious congregations*. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/11343/35508>
- Hodgens, E. (2019, January 2). Authentic Christianity embraces the new. *La Croix*. Retrieved from <https://international.la-croix.com/news/authentic-christianity-embraces-the-new/9143>
- Hughes, K. (1995). *Looking back, looking forward: A Catholic school system in action*. Leichhardt, Australia: Catholic Education Office, Sydney.
- Hughes, K. (2001). The development of the comprehensive school in New South Wales: the influence of Harold Wyndham and the 1957 Wyndham Report. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 28(2), 1–32.
- Hughes, P. (2015). Why young people are leaving the church. *Pointers: Bulletin of the Christian Research Association*, 25(1), 1–8.
- Imbelli, R. P. (2014). *Rekindling the Christic imagination: Theological meditations for the new evangelization*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press.
- Johari, J., Yean Tan, F., & Tjik Zulkarnain, Z. I. (2018). Autonomy, workload, work-life balance and job performance among teachers. *The International Journal of Educational Management*, 32(1), 107–20. doi:10.1108/IJEM-10-2016-0226
- Keenan, A. (1979). Archbishop Polding and the Christian Brothers, 1843–1847. *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, 6(2), 36–42.
- Kelliher, F. (2005). Interpretivism and the pursuit of research legitimisation: An integral approach to single case study. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methodology*, 3(2), 123–32. Retrieved from [www.ebjrm.com](http://www.ebjrm.com)
- Kenneson, P. D. (2015). What's in a name? A brief introduction to the “Spiritual But Not Religious”. *Liturgy*, 30(3), 3–13.
- Klenowski, V., & Wyatt-Smith, C. (2012). The impact of high stakes testing: The Australian story. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 19(1), 65–79. doi:10.1080/0969594X.2011.592972



- Knott, A. (2018). A review of the royal commission into institutional responses to child abuse report. *Independent Education* 48(3), 12–14.
- La Salle Academy for Faith Formation and Religious Education. (2017). *Timeline: The new evangelisation (NE) and major church documents*. Sydney, Australia: Author.
- Lee, M. J. (2015). *The institutionalisation of charism in a faith-based school: A case study of a school in the Dominican tradition*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a9cbc77b0b95>
- Leech, N. L. (2005). The role of sampling in qualitative research. *Academic Exchange Quarterly*, 9(3), 280–284.
- Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, R. (2011). Beyond constant comparison qualitative data analysis: Using NVivo. *School psychology quarterly*, 26(1), 70–84.
- Lehmann, K. (1992). The meaning of a new evangelization of Europe. *Communio*, 19(Winter), 541–575.
- Lichtman, M. (2006). *Qualitative research in education: A users guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lonergan B. J. (1974). Theology in a new context. In W. F. J. Ryan & B. J. Tyrell (Eds.), *A second collection: Papers by Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S. J.* (pp. 63–64). Toronto, Canada: University Press for Lonergan Research Institute of Regis College, Toronto.
- Luttrell, J. (2003). *The inspector calls: Catholic school inspectors in Sydney 1848–1970*. Sydney, Australia: Catholic Education Office.
- Luttrell, J. (2008). The diocese of Broken Bay: Foundation years (Essay). *Journal of the Australian Catholic Historical Society*, 29, 51.
- Luttrell, J. (2012). “Australianizing” the local Catholic church: Polding to Gilroy. *Journal of Religious History*, 36(3), 335–350. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9809.2012.01171.x
- Lynch, A. P. (2016). Negotiating social inclusion: The Catholic church in Australia and the public sphere. *Cogitatio: Social Inclusion* 4(2), 107–116.  
Doi: 10.17645/si.v4i2.500
- Mallon, J. (2014). *Divine renovation: Bringing your parish from maintenance to mission*. New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications.



- Malloy, F. G. (2015). *The use of NAPLAN data in Catholic schools*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a9cc6f4b0bc7>
- Martin, R. (2012). *Will many be saved ? What Vatican II actually teaches and its implications for the new evangelization*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B.Eerdmans.
- Masci, D. (Producer). (2015). Who are ‘cultural Catholics’? Washington, DC: Pew Research Center. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/09/03/who-are-cultural-catholics/>
- Mason, M. C., Singleton, A. T., & Webber, R. (2007). *The spirit of Generation Y: Young people's spirituality in a changing Australia*. Mulgrave, Australia: Garratt.
- Mason, M. C., Webber, R., Singleton, A. T., & Hughes, P. J. (2006). *The spirit of Generation Y: Final report of a three year study*. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Catholic University, Monash University, Christian Research Association.
- Mata-McMahon, J. (2016). Reviewing the research in children’s spirituality (2005–2015): Proposing a pluricultural approach. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 21(2), 140–152. doi:10.1080/1364436X.2016.1186611
- Mathews, B. P. (2017). Optimising implementation of reforms to better prevent and respond to child sexual abuse in institutions: Insights from public health, regulatory theory, and Australia’s Royal Commission. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 74, 86–98.
- Mathews, B. P. (2018, May). *Trends in the prevalence of child sexual abuse, problems in definitions and measurement, and challenges for research, policy, law and treatment*. Paper presented at the Interdisciplinary Research Centre on Intimate Relationship Problems and Sexual Abuse Conference on Intimate Relationship Problems and Sexual Abuse, Montreal, Canada. Retrieved from <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/120534/>
- Mazzer, K. (2013). *Teachers and sports coaches supporting young people’s mental health: The roles of teachers and sports coaches in promotion, prevention and early intervention for young people’s mental health*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology’s (WASET) International Conference on Applied Psychology and Behavioral Science, Paris, France.

- Mazzer, K. R., & Rickwood, D. J. (2014). Teachers' role breadth and perceived efficacy in supporting student mental health. *Advances in School Mental Health Promotion*, 8(1), 1–13. doi:10.1080/1754730X.2014.978119
- McCallion, M. (2012, February 15). Catholic new evangelization: Who has even heard of it? *The Catholic Conversation: From a sociologist's perspective*.  
<http://sites.nd.edu/thecc/2012/02/15/catholic-new-evangelization-who-has-even-heard-of-it/>
- McCrimble, M. (2016). *Education future report*. Baulkham Hills, Australia: McCrimble. Retrieved from [mccrimble.com.au](http://mccrimble.com.au)
- McCrimble, M. (2017). *Faith and belief in Australia: A national study of religion, spirituality and worldview trends*. Baulkham Hills, Australia: McCrimble. Retrieved from <https://mccrimble.com.au/insights/publications/reports-and-summaries/>:
- McGillion, C., & Grace, D. (2014). *Reckoning: The Catholic church and child sexual abuse*. Adelaide, Australia: ATF Press.
- McGregor, P. (2012). New world, new pentecost, new church : Pope John Paul's II's understanding of New Evangelisation. *Compass*, 46(1), 18–32.
- McKenzie, P., Weldon, P. R., Rowley, G., Murphy, M., & McMillan, J. (2014). Staff in Australia's schools 2013: Main report on the survey. Camberwell, Australia: ACER.
- McLaughlin, D. (2000). The Catholic school: Avenue to authenticity. *Catholic Education: A Journal of Inquiry and Practice*, 3(3), 274–292.
- McLaughlin, D. (2008). Educating together in Catholic Schools: A shared mission between consecrated persons and the lay faithful. *Journal of Catholic School Studies*, 80(2), 37–53.
- McPhillips, K. (2017). Unbearable knowledge: Managing cultural trauma at the royal commission." *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 27(2), 130–146.
- McPhillips, K. (2020). Religion after the royal commission: Challenges to religion–state relations. *Religions*, 11(1), 44.
- McQuillan, P. (2011). Who's coming to school today? *Pointers: Bulletin of the Christian Research Association*, 21(3), 14–15.
- Meadmore, P. (2001). 'Free, compulsory and secular'? The re-invention of Australian public education. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(2), 113–125.

- Measor, L., & Sikes, P. (1992). Visiting lives: Ethics and methodology in life history. In I. Goodson (Ed.), *Studying teachers' lives* (pp. 209–233). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Mellor, A. E. (2016). *Starting further back: An analysis of Karl Rahner's mystagogical approach applied to the new evangelisation in an Australian setting*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Sydney, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a9cc8d6b0bd1>
- Mellor, A. E. (2018). Catholic education in the twenty-first century: Narrative, purpose and ecclesial context. *The Australasian Catholic Record*, 95(4), 455.
- Mercer, J. (2007). The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: Wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(1), 1–17.
- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (Rev. ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Middleton, W., Stavropoulos, P., Dorahy, M., Kruger, C., Lewis-Fernandez, R., Martinez, A., ... Brand, B. (2014). The Australian royal commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry*, 48(1), 17–21.
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA, Australia) & Australia. Department of Education, Science Training. (2003). *National safe schools framework*. Carlton South, Australia: Author.
- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA, Australia). (2008). *Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians*. Melbourne: Author. Retrieved from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.arc-93985>
- Myburgh, C., & Poggenpoel, M. (2003). The researcher as a research instrument in educational research: A possible threat to trustworthiness? *Education*, 124(4).
- Nardi, G. (2015, March 6). "Renaissance" not "Reconquista" -- Cardinal Marx: "The Church's doctrine must develop further" [Blog post]. Retrieved from <http://www.theeponymousflower.com/2015/03/renaissance-not-reconquista-cardinal.html?m=1>
- National Catholic Education Commission (NCE). (2013). *Australian Catholic schools why we have them? What they aim to achieve?* Retrieved from

[http://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=61:australian-catholic](http://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=61:australian-catholic)

- National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC). (2016a). *Australian Catholic schools 2014*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/resources/catholic-school-statistics>
- National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC). (2016b). *2016 Annual report*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/resources/publications>
- National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC). (2017). *A framework for formation for mission in Catholic education*. Retrieved from Sydney: <https://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au/images/AFramework4FormationMission.pdf>
- Neidhart, H., & Lamb, J. (2016). Australian Catholic schools today: School identity and leadership formation. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 19(3), 49. doi:10.15365/joce.1903042016
- Norreklit, L. (2006). The double hermeneutics of life world. *Danish Centre for Philosophy and Science Studies*, 5, 1–12.
- Novello, H. (2015). The Church's lament: Child sexual abuse and the new evangelisation. *Australasian Catholic Record*, 92(3), 298–316. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.acu.edu.au/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=109950859&site=ehost-live>
- NVivo 9 Advanced*. (2010). Melbourne, Australia: QSR International.
- NVivo 9 Basics*. (2010). Melbourne, Australia: QSR International.
- O'Donoghue, T. (2007). *Planning your qualitative research project* [ebook]. New York, NY: Routledge.
- O'Donoghue, T. (2017). The experience of being a lay teacher in Catholic schools: An approach for investigating the history of an under-researched field. *Espacio, Tiempo y Educación*, 5(2), pp. 163–178. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14516/ete.182>
- O'Donoghue, T. (2018). *Planning your qualitative research thesis and project: An introduction to interpretivist research in education and the social sciences* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge CRC Press.
- O'Farrell, P. J. (1992). *The Catholic Church and community: An Australian history* (3rd rev. ed.). Kensington, Australia: New South Wales University Press.
- O'Loughlin, F. (2007). The new evangelisation of the twenty-first century. *The Australasian Catholic Record*, 84(4), 401–413.

- O'Loughlin, F. (2012). *This time of the church*. Mulgrave, Australia: Garratt.
- O'Murchu, D. (2010). *Adult faith: Growing in wisdom and understanding*. New York, NY: Orbis.
- O'Murchu, D. (2011). *Christianity's dangerous memory*. New York, NY: Crossroad.
- ÓMurchú, D. (2015). *Inclusivity: A Gospel mandate*: Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.
- Ormerod, N. (2019). Sexual abuse, a royal commission, and the Australian church. *Theological Studies*, 80(4), 950–966.
- Pastoral Research Office (PRO). (2015). Mass attending teachers in Catholic schools. *Pastoral Research Online*, (27), 4. Retrieved from [www.pro.catholic.org.au](http://www.pro.catholic.org.au)
- Pastoral Research Office (PRO, Producer). (2016). Pastoral Research Online Edition 33. *Pastoral Research Online Edition 33*. Retrieved from <http://pro.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Pastoral-Research-Online-Edition-33-September-2016.pdf>
- Pastoral Research Office (PRO, Producer). (2017a). Pastoral Research Online Edition 39. *Pastoral Research Online*. Retrieved from <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Pastoral-Research-Online-Edition-39-October-2017.pdf>
- Pastoral Research Office (PRO, Producer). (2017b). Pastoral Research Online Edition 40,. *Pastoral Research Online*. Retrieved from <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Pastoral-Research-Online-Edition-40-December-2017.pdf>
- Pastoral Research Office (PRO, Producer). (2019). Pastoral Research Online Edition 44. *Pastoral Research Online*. Retrieved from <https://ncpr.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Pastoral-Research-Online-Edition-44-April-2019.pdf#page=2>
- Patton, M. (1990). Qualitative interviewing. In *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (pp. 339–427). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Peterson, A. L., & Vasquez, M. A. (1998). The new evangelization in Latin American perspective. *CrossCurrents*, 48(3), 311–329.
- Pew Research Center. (2013). *The global Catholic population*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2013/02/13/the-global-catholic-population/>.

- Pew Research Center. (2015). *The future of world religions: Population growth projections, 2010–2050*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projections-2010-2050/>
- Phelps, R. (2005). The potential of reflective journals in studying complexity 'in action'. *Complicity: An International Journal of Complexity and Education*, 2(1), 37–54.
- Pink, B. (2011, September 21). Are all schools uniform? *Australian Bureau of Statistics Australian Social Trends*. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Lookup/4102.0Main+Features40Sep+2011>
- Polack, D., & Pickel, G. (2008). Religious individualization or secularization? Testing hypothesis of religious change: The case of Eastern and Western Germany. *British Journal of Sociology*, 58(4), 603–632.
- Polesel, J., Rice, S., & Dulfer, N. (2014). The impact of high-stakes testing on curriculum and pedagogy: A teacher perspective from Australia. *Journal of Education Policy*, 29(5), 640–657.
- Pollefeyt, D. (2014). *Identity in dialogue. Assessing and enhancing Catholic school identity. Research methodology and research results in Catholic schools in Victoria, Australia* (Christian Religious Education and School Identity, 1). Zurich, Germany: Lit Verlag.
- Pollefeyt, D., & Bouwens, J. (2010). Framing the identity of Catholic schools: Empirical methodology for quantitative research on the Catholic identity of an education institute. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 2(2), 193–211.  
doi:10.1080/19422539.2010.504034
- Pope Benedict XVI. (2006). *God is love: Deus caritas est: Encyclical letter*. Vatican City & San Francisco: Libreria Editrice Vaticana; Ignatius Press.
- Pope Benedict XVI. (2010, June ). *Homily at papal mass on the solemnity of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, first vespers*. Retrieved from [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20100628\\_vespri-pietro-paolo.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2010/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20100628_vespri-pietro-paolo.html)
- Pope Benedict XVI. (2011, November). *Address of his holiness Benedict XVI to the Bishops from the United States of America on their "Ad Limina" visit*. Holy See: Vatican. Retrieved from <http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict->

[xvi/en/speeches/2011/november/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20111126\\_bishops-usa.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2011/november/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20111126_bishops-usa.html)

Pope Benedict XVI. (2012, October). *Homily at Mass for the conclusion of the Synod of Bishops*. AAS 104 (2012), 890. Retrieved from

[http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2012/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_hom\\_20121028\\_conclusionone-sinodo.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20121028_conclusionone-sinodo.html)

Pope, C., Ziebland, S., & Mays, N. (2000). Qualitative research in health care: Analysing qualitative data. *British Medical Journal*, 320, 114–116. Retrieved from

[www.bmj.com](http://www.bmj.com)

Pope Francis. (2013). *Apostolic exhortation Evangelii Gaudium of the Holy Father Francis to the bishops, clergy, consecrated persons and the lay faithful on the proclamation of the Gospel in today's world*. [encyclical, 8820992078]. Libreria Editrice Vaticana Retrieved from

[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html)

Pope John XXIII (1962, October 11). *Address on the occasion of the solemn opening of the most holy Council*. Retrieved from

<https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?RecNum=3233>

Pope John Paul II. (1991). *Redemptoris missio: On the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate* [Encyclical]. Homebush, Australia: St Pauls.

Pope John Paul II. (1993, October 18). *Address to the officers and board of directors of the Knights of Columbus*. Retrieved from [www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1993/october/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_19931018\\_cavalieri-colombo.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1993/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19931018_cavalieri-colombo.html)

Pope John Paul II. (1994). *Tertio millennio adveniente: Apostolic letter of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to the bishops, clergy and lay faithful on preparation for the jubilee of the year 2000*. Strathfield, Australia: St. Pauls.

Pope John Paul II. (2001a). *Apostolic letter Novo Millennio Ineunte—at the beginning of the new millennium—to the bishops, clergy and lay faithful at the close of the great jubilee of the year 2000* (Australian ed.). Strathfield, Australia: St. Pauls.

Pope John Paul II. (2001b). *Ecclesia in Oceania: Post-synodal apostolic exhortation of his holiness Pope John Paul II to the bishops, priests and deacons, men and women in the consecrated life and all the lay faithful on Jesus Christ and the*



- peoples of Oceania: Walking his way, telling his truth, living his life* (Australian ed.). Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls.
- Pope Paul VI. (1965a). *Declaration on Christian education: Gravissimum educationis*. Boston, MA: St. Paul Editions.
- Pope Paul VI. (1965b). Decree on the Church's missionary activity. In A. Flannery (Ed.), *Vatican II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar documents* (Vol. 1). New York, NY: Costello.
- Pope Paul VI. (1965c). *Gaudium et spes: Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world*. Retrieved from [www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_cons\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)
- Pope Paul VI. (1965d). *Pastoral constitution on the Church in the modern world*. In A. Flannery (Ed.), *Vatican II: The conciliar and post conciliar documents* (Vol. 1988). New York: Costello.
- Pope Paul VI. (1974, October). *Address to the Members of the Consilium de Laicis*. AAS 66 (1974), p. 568.
- Pope Paul VI. (1975). *Evangelii nuntiandi: Apostolic exhortation of His Holiness Pope Paul VI to the episcopate, to the clergy and to all the faithful of the entire world on evangelization in the modern world*. Sydney, Australia: Society of St. Paul.
- Powell, R., Pepper, M., & Hancock, N. (2016). *NCLS Survey 2011*. North Sydney, Australia: National Church Life Surveys. Retrieved from <http://www.ncls.org.au/research/2011-national-church-life-survey>
- Ranson, D. (2009). *Between the 'politics of mysticism' and the 'mysticism of politics': Implications of the universal call to holiness within the Roman Catholic tradition*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a95f47dc6821>
- Rees, S. (2001). *The floating brothel: The extraordinary story of the Lady Julian and its cargo of female convicts bound for Botany Bay*. Sydney, Australia: Hodder.
- Robinson, G. (2007). *Confronting power and sex in the Catholic Church: Reclaiming the spirit of Jesus*. Melbourne, Australia: Garratt.
- Rohr, R. (2019). *Universal Christ: How a forgotten reality can change everything we see, hope for, and believe*. New York, NY: Convergent.



- Ross, S. A. (2013). *Conversion, the new evangelization, and the call of Vatican II*. Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America, 2013, pp. 55–69.
- Rossiter, G. (2013). Perspective on the use of the construct ‘catholic identity’ for Australian Catholic schooling: Sociological background and literature. Part 1. *Journal of Religious Education* 61(2), 4–16.
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. (2017). *Final report: Royal commission into institutional responses to child sexual abuse*. Sydney, Australia: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/final-report>
- Rymarz, R. (2010a). A fork in the road: Religious quest and secularization. *The Australasian Catholic Record*, 87(3), 259–271.
- Rymarz, R. (2010b). *Principles of the new evangelization: Analysis and directions*. (Doctoral dissertation, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne, Australia). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.4226/66/5a96079bc683e>
- Rymarz, R. (2011). Some principles for the evangelization of Catholics in secular cultures. *Australian E-Journal of Theology*, 18(2), 9.
- Rymarz, R. (2012). *The new evangelisation: Issues and challenges for Catholic schools*. Ballan, Australia: Connor Court.
- Rymarz, R., & Cleary, A. (2016). Some religious beliefs and behaviours of Australian Catholic school students. *Journal of Beliefs & Values*, 37(1), 68–77.
- Rymarz, R., & Graham, J. (2006). Australian core Catholic youth, Catholic schools and religious education. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 28(1), 79–89. doi:10.1080/01416200500273745
- Samaan, P. G. (2012). *Christ's method alone: Christ's way of relational witnessing*. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald.
- Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee (2018). *Report: Arrangements for the postal survey*. Retrieved from [https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Fi](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Fi)
- Sharkey, P. (2007). *Religious leadership in a Catholic school*. (A coursework project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Education, Leadership and Management, The Flinders University of South Australia, Adelaide, Australia).

- Sharkey, P. (2019). Profiling and enhancing religious education in Catholic schools. In M. T. Buchanan & A. M. Gellel (Eds.), *Global perspectives on Catholic religious education in schools* (pp. 469–479). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer Press.
- Shields, R. (2018). Gospel values and Catholic education: Revitalizing the faith community in a culture of “whatever”. *Religious Education*, 113(1), 84–95.
- Singleton, A. (2014). *Religion, culture and society: A global approach*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Singleton, A. (2018, September 18). New research shows Australian teens have complex views on religion and spirituality. *The Conversation*. Retrieved from <http://theconversation.com/new-research-shows-australian-teens-have-complex-views-on-religion-and-spirituality-103233>
- Smith, C. (2005). *Soul searching the religious and spiritual lives of American teenagers*. Oxford, United Kingdom: University Press.
- Smith, C., & Snell, P. (2009). *Souls in transition: The religious and spiritual lives of emerging adult*. Oxford, United Kingdom: University Press.
- Stahl, B. C. (2003, August). *How we invent what we measure: A constructionist critique of the empirical basis in IS research*. Proceedings of the Ninth American Conference on Information Systems, Tampa, 2878–2884.
- Stake, R. (2004). The case study method of social inquiry. In R. Gomm, M. Hammersley, & P. Foster (Eds.), *Case study methodology* (Vol. 1, pp. 19–26). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood. (2013). *National safe schools framework*. Carlton South, Australia: Education Services Australia.
- Stevenson, D., Dunn, K., Possamai, A., & Piracha, A. (2010). Religious belief across ‘post-secular’ Sydney: The multiple trends in (de)secularisation. *Australian Geographer*, 41(3), 323–350. doi:10.1080/00049182.2010.498039
- Struckmeyer, K. (2010). *Following Jesus: A life of faith in a postmodern world*. [website] <http://www.followingjesus.org>
- Sultmann, W. F. (2018). *Cornerstone: Encountering the spirit of Christ in the Catholic school*. Bayswater, Australia: Coventry Press.
- Sultmann, W. F., & Brown, R. (2014). Catholic school identity and the new evangelization. *Journal of Religious Education*, 62(1), 1–13. doi:10.1007/s40839-014-0001-6

- Sultmann, W. F., & Brown, R. (2016). Leadership and identity in the Catholic school: An Australian perspective. *International Studies in Catholic Education*, 8(1), 73–89. doi:10.1080/19422539.2016.1140419
- Sultmann, W. F., Thurgood, G. and Rasmussen, B. (2003). What parents are thinking: Some reflections on choices for schooling. *Catholic School Studies*, 76(2), 16–20.
- Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Board. (2010). *2010 Annual report*. Leichardt, Australia: Author.
- Synod of Bishops of Oceania. (1998, November–December). *Instrumentum laboris: Walking his way telling his truth and living his life*. Paper presented at the Synod of Bishops Special Assembly for Oceania, Jesus Christ and the Peoples of Oceania.
- Taylor, C. (2007). *A secular age*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.
- Tacey, D. (2003). *The spirituality revolution* (1st ed.). Sydney, Australia: Harper Collins.
- Tacey, D. (2019). *The postsecular sacred: Jung, soul and meaning in an age of change*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Tellis, W. M. (1997a). Application of a case study methodology. *The Qualitative Report*, 3(3), 1–19. Retrieved from <https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol3/iss3/1>
- Tellis, W. M. (1997b). Introduction to case study. *The Qualitative Report*, 3(2). Retrieved from [www.nova.edu/sss/QR/QR3-2/tellis!.html](http://www.nova.edu/sss/QR/QR3-2/tellis!.html)
- Tickle, P. (2008). *The great emergence: How Christianity is changing and why*. Ada, MI: Baker.
- Timbs, D. (2016). *The end of the age of entitlement*. Doncaster Heights, Australia: Catholics for Renewal.
- Treston, K. (2018). *The wind blows where it chooses: The quest for a Christian story in our time*. Melbourne, Australia: Coventry Press.
- Turkington, M., Ghantous, S., & Crook, S. (2016). Developing an aligned system-wide strategic plan: The critical role of collaboration—a case study from Sydney Catholic Schools. *Australian Educational Leader*, 38(3), 40.
- Tynan, M. (2013). *New evangelization, conversion and Catholic education*. (Master's thesis, University of Notre Dame, Australia). Retrieved from <http://researchonline.nd.edu.au/theses/97>

- Van Nguyen, V. L. (2017, September 13). *Same-sex marriage postal survey* [Pastoral letter]. Retrieved from <https://parracatholic.org/parra/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Pastoral-Letter-13.09.2017.pdf>
- Weldon, P. (2015). *The teacher workforce in Australia: Supply, demand and data issues*. (Policy Insights 2). Retrieved from Camberwell: [www.acer.edu.au](http://www.acer.edu.au)
- Wexler, C. V. (2016). *Catholic women confront their church: Stories of hurt and hope*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Whelen, J. D. (2019). Teachers, clergy, schools and paedophilia: Making a mockery of the duty of care. In R. Webster & J. Whelen (Eds.), *Rethinking reflection and ethics for teachers* (pp. 81–98). Singapore: Springer.
- Wilkinson, P. (2011). Catholic parish ministry in Australia: Facing disaster? Manuka, Australia: Catholics for Ministry. Retrieved from <http://www.catholica.com.au/editorial/CatholicParishMinistry.pdf>
- Wilkinson, P. (2013). Who goes to mass in Australia in the 21st century? *Catholica*. Retrieved from [http://www.catholica.com.au/gc4/pw/005\\_pw\\_print.php](http://www.catholica.com.au/gc4/pw/005_pw_print.php)
- Wright, K., Swain, S., & McPhillips, K. (2017). The Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Roman Catholic Church. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 74, 1–9.
- Yin, R. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## Appendices

**Appendix A**  
Australian Catholic University  
Human Research Ethics Committee  
**Project Approval Certificate**

<b>Chief Investigator/Supervisor:</b>	Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin
<b>Student Researcher:</b>	John Kyle-Robinson
<b>Project title:</b>	Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools and the New Evangelization
<b>Project approval date:</b>	25 March 2014
<b>Project approval end date:</b>	30 June 2015
<b>Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number:</b>	2014 18Q

This is to certify that the above application has been reviewed by the Australian Catholic University Human Research Ethics Committee (ACU HREC). The application was approved for the period given above.

Continued approval of this research project was contingent upon the submission of an annual progress report due on/before each anniversary of the project approval. A final report was submitted upon completion of the project. Report proformas can be downloaded from the website (link below).

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that all conditions of approval are adhered to and that any modifications to the protocol, including changes to personnel, were approved prior to implementation. In addition, the ACU HREC must be notified of any reportable matters including, but not limited to, incidents, complaints and unexpected issues.

Researchers are also responsible for ensuring that they adhere to the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* and the University's *Research Code of Conduct*.

Any queries relating to this application should be directed to the Research Ethics and Integrity Office ([Res.Ethics@acu.edu.au](mailto:Res.Ethics@acu.edu.au)).

**Kind regards,**

08/01/2020

**Nina Robinson**

Research Ethics & Integrity Officer

On behalf of the ACU HREC Chair, Associate Professor Michael Baker

Research Ethics and Integrity | Research Services, Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)

Australian Catholic University

**T:** +61 2 9739 2646

**E:** [Res.Ethics@acu.edu.au](mailto:Res.Ethics@acu.edu.au)

**W:** ACU Research Ethics and Integrity

**Appendix B**  
**Catholic Education Office, Sydney: Letter of Approval for Research**

Catholic Education Office **Sydney**  
www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au



31 March 2014

Ref: Research Application 888

Mr John Kyle-Robinson  
Trinity Catholic College  
13 Park Road  
AUBURN NSW 2144

Dear John,

RE: RESEARCH APPLICATION REF: 888 – LETTER OF APPROVAL

Thank you for the submission of your application to conduct research in Archdiocesan Catholic Schools under the jurisdiction of the Catholic Education Office (CEO) Sydney. Approval is given by CEO Sydney to conduct this study. **This approval is granted subject to full compliance with NSW Child Protection and Commonwealth Privacy Act legislation.** It is the prerogative of any Principal or staff member whom you might approach to decline your invitation to be involved in this study or to withdraw from involvement at any time. Any study involving the participation of students will require written, informed consent by parents/guardians.

Permission is given for you to approach the Principals of the schools nominated, requesting participants for your study: *“Teachers in Catholic Secondary schools and the New Evangelization”*.

**COMMONWEALTH PRIVACY ACT**

The privacy of the school and that of any school personnel or students involved in your study must, of course, be preserved at all times and comply with requirements under the Commonwealth Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000. In complying with this legislation, the CEO Sydney has decided that individual research participants should not be identified in the report.

**FURTHER REQUIREMENTS**

When you have established your participating schools, please **complete the attached form and return it** to this office.

It is a condition of approval that when your research has been completed you will forward a **summary report of the findings and/or recommendations** to this office as soon as results are to hand.

38 Renwick Street, PO Box 217, Leichhardt NSW 2040 • Phone (02) 9569 6111 • Fax (02) 9550 0052  
Eastern Region 33 Banks Avenue, Daceyville NSW 2032 • Phone (02) 8344 3000 • Fax (02) 8344 3097  
Inner Western Region 3 Keating Street, Lidcombe NSW 2141 (Locked Bag 83, 1825) • Phone (02) 9643 3600 • Fax (02) 9643 3609  
Southern Region 300 The River Road, Revesby Heights NSW 2212 • Phone (02) 9772 7000 • Fax (02) 9772 7009

## Appendix C

### Information Letter to Principals



### INFORMATION LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

**PROJECT TITLE:** Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools and the New Evangelization

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin

**STUDENT RESEARCHER:** John Kyle-Robinson

**STUDENT'S DEGREE:** Doctor of Education

Dear Principal,

You are invited to participate in a research project that explores teachers' understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelization in Catholic secondary schools.

#### *What is the project about?*

The major research question is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelization?

#### *Who is undertaking the project?*

This project is being conducted by John Kyle-Robinson and forms the basis for the degree of Doctor of Education at Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin.

#### *Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?*



Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participating in this project. In addition, the researcher abides by the requirements of the Commonwealth Privacy Act, 2000. Approval to conduct this research in Systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney has also been obtained from Catholic Education Office, Sydney.

***Can I withdraw from the study?***

If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

***What will I be asked to do?***

Data for this research project is generated through:

- I. Semi—structured focus group interviews with two groups of volunteer teachers;
- II. Interviews with teachers and school leaders responsible for leading New Evangelization initiatives in your school and may include for example the Principal, Assistant Principal, Leaders of Religious Education/Mission, and Youth Ministers;
- III. Analysis of school documents related to the implementation of the New Evangelization in your school. The publicly available documents are:
  - Annual Reports to the Community
  - Information on the school’s website

School documents that you might make available for the research could include:

- Annual Improvement plans for 2010-13
  - The most recent Cyclic review documents
  - Relevant role descriptions
  - Teaching and learning programs referencing the New Evangelization
- iv. An online survey

***How much time will the project take?***

The semi-structured focus group interviews with teachers and interviews with school leaders will not exceed 60 minutes and will be conducted at a time and place convenient to participants. The interviews are recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed to text. The data generated will be stored securely at all times.

Invitations to teachers to volunteer for these focus groups will be extended in writing to all teaching staff at your school. Two small random groups of teachers are selected from those who agree to participate to be involved in a focus group interviews. Principals are asked to nominate relevant teachers and school leaders responsible for leading New Evangelization initiatives in your school to volunteer to participate in separate interviews.

***What are the benefits of the research project?***

Your participation in this research may inform current understandings of the New Evangelization in the Australian educational context and therefore may assist in better preparing school administrators and teachers to implement it. This study is of significance as it offers a “voice” to teachers who are entrusted to be the implementers of the New Evangelization.

***Will anyone else know the results of the project?***

Key findings of this research may be disseminated in academic or Catholic Education Office, Sydney publications.

All school documentation and participants remain anonymous. The aggregated data arising from this research does not identify the names of schools or participants. Further, participants are given an opportunity to review their contribution to the research before thesis submission for examination. The data is securely stored at all times.

***Will I be able to find out the results of the project?***

At the conclusion of the study, you will receive a summary of the research as an appreciation of your participation.

***Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?***

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Principal Investigator, Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin or the student researcher, John Kyle-Robinson.

Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin  
Faculty of Education and Arts  
Australian Catholic University  
Brisbane Campus  
Building F  
Level 3 FC43  
+617 3623 7154  
[denis.mclaughlin@acu.edu.au](mailto:denis.mclaughlin@acu.edu.au)

Researcher, John Kyle-Robinson  
Higher Degree Student  
Australian Catholic University  
[jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au)

***What if I have a complaint or any concerns?***

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (approval number 2013 xxxx). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Chair, HREC  
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)  
Australian Catholic University  
Melbourne Campus  
Locked Bag 4115

FITZROY, VIC, 3065

Ph: 03 9953 3150

Fax: 03 9953 3315

Email: [res.ethics@acu.edu.au](mailto:res.ethics@acu.edu.au)

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

***I want to participate! How do I sign up?***

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one for your records and return the other to the student researcher at

[jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au) by.....

Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation to take part in this research study.

Yours sincerely,

**RESEARCHER NAME/S AND SIGNATURE/S**

**Appendix D  
Consent Form – Principal**



CONSENT FORM - PRINCIPAL

*Copy for Researcher / Copy for Participant to Keep*

Project Title: **Teachers in Secondary Catholic Schools and the New Evangelization**

Principal Investigator: Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin

Student Researcher: John Kyle-Robinson

Student’s Degree: Doctor of Education

I ..... (*the participant*) have read and understood the information provided in the Information Letter to Principals. My questions have been addressed to my satisfaction. I agree for my school to participate in this study but I understand that each individual must give their own consent. Data for this research project will be generated through:

- (i) Focus groups of teachers.
- (ii) Semi-structured interviews with school leaders responsible for leading New Evangelization initiatives in your school and may include the Principal, Assistant Principal, Leaders of Religious Education/Mission, and Youth Ministers
- (iii) Analysis of school documents related to the New Evangelization.
- (iv) Online survey

I understand that the generated data will be stored securely and that I may withdraw my consent at any time without any adverse consequences. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me or the school that I lead.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: .....

NAME OF SCHOOL:

---

SIGNATURE ..... DATE .....

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one for your records and return the other copy to the Student Researcher via email [jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au) by

## Appendix E

# INFORMATION LETTER to PARTICIPANTS for FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

**PROJECT TITLE:** Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools and the New Evangelization

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin

**STUDENT RESEARCHER:** John Kyle-Robinson

**STUDENT'S DEGREE:** Doctor of Education

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research project that explores teachers' understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelization in Catholic secondary schools.

### ***What is the project about?***

The major research question is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelization?

### ***Who is undertaking the project?***

This project is being conducted by John Kyle-Robinson and forms the basis for the degree of Doctor of Education at Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin.

### ***Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?***

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participating in this project. In addition, the researcher abides by the requirements of the Commonwealth Privacy Act, 2000. Approval to conduct this research in Systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney has also been obtained from Catholic Education Office, Sydney.

### ***Can I withdraw from the study?***

If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

### ***What will I be asked to do?***

You are invited to participate in a semi—structured focus group interview with approximately six other volunteers from your school.

***How much time will the project take?***

The interviews with teachers will not exceed 60 minutes and will be conducted at a time and place convenient to participants. The interviews are recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed to text. The data generated will be stored securely at all times.

***What are the benefits of the research project?***

Your participation in this research may inform current understandings of the New Evangelization in the Australian educational context and therefore may assist in better preparing school administrators and teachers to implement it. This study is of significance as it offers a “voice” to teachers who are entrusted to be the implementers of the New Evangelization.

***Will anyone else know the results of the project?***

Key findings of this research may be disseminated in academic or Catholic Education Office, Sydney publications.

All school documentation and participants remain anonymous. The aggregated data arising from this research does not identify the names of schools or participants. Further, participants are given an opportunity to review their contribution to the research before thesis submission for examination. The data is securely stored at all times.

***Will I be able to find out the results of the project?***

At the conclusion of the study, you will receive a summary of the research as an appreciation of your participation.

***Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?***

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Principal Investigator, Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin or the student researcher, John Kyle-Robinson.

Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin  
Faculty of Education and Arts  
Australian Catholic University  
Brisbane Campus  
Building F  
Level 3 FC43  
+617 3623 7154  
[jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au)

Researcher, John Kyle-Robinson  
Higher Degree Student  
Australian Catholic University  
[jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au)

***What if I have a complaint or any concerns?***

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (approval number 2013 xxxx). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Chair, HREC  
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)  
Australian Catholic University  
Melbourne Campus  
Locked Bag 4115  
FITZROY, VIC, 3065  
Ph: 03 9953 3150  
Fax: 03 9953 3315  
Email: [res.ethics@acu.edu.au](mailto:res.ethics@acu.edu.au)

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

***I want to participate! How do I sign up?***

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one for your records and return the other to the student researcher at [jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au) by.....

Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation to take part in this research study.

Yours sincerely,

**RESEARCHER NAME/S AND SIGNATURE/S**



**Appendix F**

**CONSENT FORM – Teacher interview participant**



CONSENT FORM – Teacher interview participant  
*Copy for Researcher / Copy for Participant to Keep*

Project Title:	<b>Teachers in Secondary Catholic Schools and the New Evangelization</b>
Principal Investigator:	Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin
Student Researcher:	John Kyle-Robinson
Student’s Degree:	Doctor of Education

I ..... *(the participant)* have read and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. My questions have been addressed to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in a semi-structured focus group interview with other teachers for a research project that explores teachers’ understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelization in Catholic secondary schools. I understand that the event will not exceed 60 minutes and will be conducted at the school at a convenient time. The meeting will be recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed to text. I understand that after the focus group I must remain confidential about what others say during the focus group. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: .....

NAME OF SCHOOL:

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE .....

DATE .....

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one for your records and return the other copy to the Student Researcher via email [jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au) by .....

**Appendix G**  
**INFORMATION LETTER to PARTICIPANTS for INDIVIDUAL**  
**INTERVIEW**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Teachers in Catholic Secondary Schools and the New Evangelization

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin

**STUDENT RESEARCHER:** John Kyle-Robinson

**STUDENT'S DEGREE:** Doctor of Education

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research project that explores teachers' understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelization in Catholic secondary schools.

***What is the project about?***

The major research question is: How do teachers in Catholic secondary schools experience the New Evangelization?

***Who is undertaking the project?***

This project is being conducted by John Kyle-Robinson and forms the basis for the degree of Doctor of Education at Australian Catholic University under the supervision of Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin.

***Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?***

Participation in this study is voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks associated with participating in this project. In addition, the researcher abides by the requirements of the Commonwealth Privacy Act, 2000. Approval to conduct this research in Systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney has also been obtained from Catholic Education Office, Sydney.

***Can I withdraw from the study?***

If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

***What will I be asked to do?***

You are invited to participate in a semi—structured individual interview. You have been nominated by your Principal due to your understanding and experience in implementing the New Evangelization in your school.

***How much time will the project take?***

The interview will not exceed 60 minutes and will be conducted at a time and place convenient to you. The interviews are recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed to text. The data generated will be stored securely at all times.

***What are the benefits of the research project?***

Your participation in this research may inform current understandings of the New Evangelization in the Australian educational context and therefore may assist in better preparing school administrators and teachers to implement it. This study is of significance as it offers a “voice” to teachers who are entrusted to be the implementers of the New Evangelization.

***Will anyone else know the results of the project?***

Key findings of this research may be disseminated in academic or Catholic Education Office, Sydney publications.

All school documentation and participants are de-identified. The aggregated data arising from this research does not identify the names of schools or participants. Further, participants are given an opportunity to review their contribution to the research before thesis submission for examination. The data is securely stored at all times.

***Will I be able to find out the results of the project?***

At the conclusion of the study, you will receive a summary of the research as an appreciation of your participation.

***Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?***

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Principal Investigator, Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin or the student researcher, John Kyle-Robinson.

Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin  
Faculty of Education and Arts  
Australian Catholic University  
Brisbane Campus  
Building F  
Level 3 FC43  
+617 3623 7154  
[jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au)

Researcher, John Kyle-Robinson  
Higher Degree Student  
Australian Catholic University  
[jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au)

***What if I have a complaint or any concerns?***

The study has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University (approval number 2013 xxxx). If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct

of the project, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Chair, HREC  
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)  
Australian Catholic University  
Melbourne Campus  
Locked Bag 4115  
FITZROY, VIC, 3065  
Ph: 03 9953 3150  
Fax: 03 9953 3315  
Email: [res.ethics@acu.edu.au](mailto:res.ethics@acu.edu.au)

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

***I want to participate! How do I sign up?***

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one for your records and return the other to the student researcher at [jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au) by.....

Thank you for taking the time to consider this invitation to take part in this research study.

Yours sincerely,

**RESEARCHER NAME/S AND SIGNATURE/S**



**Appendix H**  
**CONSENT FORM – Individual interview participant**  
*Copy for Researcher / Copy for Participant to Keep*

Project Title: **Teachers in Secondary Catholic Schools and the New Evangelization**  
Principal Investigator: Associate Professor Denis McLaughlin  
Student Researcher: John Kyle-Robinson  
Student’s Degree: Doctor of Education

I ..... (*the participant*) have read and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. My questions have been addressed to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this one-on-one semi structured interview for a research project that explores teachers’ understanding of and engagement with the New Evangelization in Catholic secondary schools. I understand that the interview will not exceed 60 minutes and will be conducted at the school at a convenient time. The meeting will be recorded using a digital recorder and later transcribed to text. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT: .....

NAME OF SCHOOL:  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE ..... DATE .....

If you agree to participate in this project, please sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one for your records and return the other copy to the Student Researcher via email [jakyle001@myacu.edu.au](mailto:jakyle001@myacu.edu.au) by

.....

**Appendix I**  
**Interview Question Schedule**

1. What's it like to be a teacher in a Catholic school?

- Positive
- Negative
- Problems/Challenges of faith/leadership

2. What are the best features for you of teaching in Catholic school?

3. How does your current experience of the Catholic faith at this school compare to when you were at school/earlier in your teaching career?

- What's changed?
- What's better/worse; more challenging?
- What are some of the features of Catholic faith that stand out in this school?

4. In general, how would you describe students' experience of the Catholic faith in this school?

- Retreats
- Liturgies
- RE classes
- Other initiatives

5. What does the term the New Evangelization mean to you?

6. How do you see the New Evangelization being implemented in your school?

- Who/How is it promoted in your school
- Are there specific programs/initiatives
- Tell me about them

7. What part (if any) do you have in implementing the New Evangelization in your school?

- Please describe these
- Positive/negative
- Challenges/opportunities

8. How do you believe these initiatives impact on you and/or the students in this school?

- Positive or negative
- Why?
- Has it led to changes in you or your/students' practices or beliefs?
- Do these initiatives pose challenges for you or students?

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

## **Appendix J**

### **Documentary Evidence Provided by Each College**

Each College Principal consented to the request to provide documentary evidence for this study. In the Information letter to Principals, the following request was made for:

....school documents related to the implementation of the New Evangelisation in your school. The publicly available documents are:

- Annual Reports to the Community
- Information on the school's website

School documents that you might make available for the research could include:

- Annual Improvement plans for 2010-13
- The most recent Cyclic review documents
- Relevant role descriptions
- Teaching and learning programs referencing the New Evangelisation

The documents provided by each College are as follows:

#### **St Mary's College**

1. St Mary's College website documentation – accessed May 27, 2014
2. St Mary's Liturgical Program (Table 5.7)
3. School identified Evangelisation Opportunities at St Mary's College (Table 5.8)
4. "St Mary's" Annual report to the community, 2014

#### **Case Study 2: St Francis' College**

1. St Francis College website documentation – accessed June 2, 2014
2. Summary of School-based Connections to the Contemporary Catholic Church (Table 5.10)
3. Anointed and sent evangelisation professional development day notes
4. Student catechist roster (A)
5. Student catechist roster (B)
6. Timor Leste correspondence
7. Fiji T-shirt fund raising
8. Pentecost message consultation correspondence
9. Student social justice group Christmas appeal
10. 2013 Social Justice day correspondence



11. Year 9 Youth ministry student activity application form
12. Steven Agrisano music concert permission form
13. Youth ministry Program 2014/15
14. Year 12 Youth ministry night patrol program
15. Peer Tutoring ministry program 2013
16. Student invitation to regional evangelisation programing day, 2014
17. Australian Red Cross Ministry program application
18. Excursion notification – Sydney Alliance Catholic school training
19. The wisdom of St Benedict – Student leaders’ application and information
20. World Youth Day – Commissioning Mass 2013
21. World Youth Day – Leaders retreat 2013
22. World Youth Day – Letter and assembly reflection
23. World Youth Day – pamphlet
24. Year 10 Evangelisation retreat – student and parent information letter
25. Year 11 students for CAPTIV8 – Walking with Christ roster
26. Year 11 – Catechist project correspondence

### **Case Study 3: St John’s College**

1. St John’s College website documentation – accessed August 1, 2014
2. College charism –
3. The “St John’s Way”
4. College charism – PowerPoint presentation
5. Annual Commencement liturgy and assembly booklet
6. Annual Year Commencement Eucharist – Liturgy booklet
7. World Youth Day Commissioning liturgy
8. “St John’s” School self-review statement
9. “St John’s” Cyclic review presentation – Catholic and religious education, pastoral care and student wellbeing and pedagogy and learning
10. “St John’s” Cyclic review report
11. “St John’s” Annual report to the community, 2014

## **Appendix K**

### **Individual interview and focus group schedule**

#### **Case Study 1: St Mary's College**

5. Focus Group 1 - Date of interview: June 4, 2014
  - a. FGT1
  - b. FGT2
  - c. FGT3
6. Focus Group 2 - Date of interview: June 4, 2014
  - a. FGT4
  - b. FGT5
  - c. FGT6
7. Focus Group 3 - Date of interview: June 4, 2014
  - a. FGT7
  - b. FGT8
  - c. FGT9
8. Individual interview - Date of interview: June 4, 2014
  - a. IT10
9. Individual interview – Date of interview: June 11, 2014
  - a. IL1

#### **Case Study 2: St Francis' College**

27. Focus Group 4 - Date of interview: June 11, 2014
  - a. FGL2
  - b. FGL3
28. Focus Group 5 - Date of interview: June 11, 2014
  - a. FGT11
  - b. FGT12
  - c. FGT13
29. Focus Group 6 - Date of interview: June 11, 2014
  - a. FGT14
  - b. FGT15
  - c. FGL4

### **Case Study 3: St John's College**

12. Focus Group 7 - Date of interview: August 18, 2014
  - a. FGL5
  - b. FGL6
13. Focus Group 8 - Date of interview: August 18, 2014
  - a. FGL7
  - b. FGT16
  - c. FGT17
14. Focus Group 9 - Date of interview: August 18, 2014
  - a. FGT18
  - b. FGT19
  - c. FGT20