

Q&A Responses from *ISCW Webinar 17 May 2023*

<p>In the report, 84% of the surveyed women agreed that reform is needed in the Catholic Church. Were the 16% expressly satisfied with the current situation?</p>	<p>More than 8 out of 10 (84%) of all respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement ‘I support reform in the Catholic Church’. Some 7% responded “Not sure”, 4% “Disagree”, and 5% “Strongly disagree”. More details regarding understandings of reform by participants can be found in section 9 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189</p>
<p>How do you balance conflicting views of women?</p>	<p>Open responses were analysed using qualitative analysis, a description of the methodology is given in section 5.5 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>How was the survey sent out and to whom?</p>	<p>Details of the method of recruitment can be found in section 5.2 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Do you really believe there is hope for change in our lifetime? Lay women and men will be given a vote in the Synod, but will they not be totally outnumbered?</p>	<p>The recommendations of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings provide a clear pathway for positive change. The research team are hopeful that if these are implemented change is possible.</p>
<p>What have been responses to the survey from official church structures? If any?</p>	<p>The research team have had discussions with Sr Nathalie Becquart, under-secretary and consultor to the Synod of Bishops, and are confident that the Synod 2021-2023 International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW) Synthesis informed the synodal process. It is available at: https://catholicwomenspeak.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Synod-2021-23-International-Survey-of-Catholic-Women-Synthesis-Full-Report-Sept-2022.pdf</p>
<p>Did many women still want to belong to a faith community? Did walking away from dysfunction equate to many as keeping their eyes on Jesus?</p>	<p>A significant majority (88%) of all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘My Catholic identity is important to me’. When asked about their current relationship with the Catholic Church in open questions, many respondents described high levels of involvement. Many open responses described a high level of religiosity, including regular private prayer and Mass attendance alongside some type of parish or local church involvement. Several linked their identity and participation with a personal relationship with Jesus and/or gospel values. Although a large portion of respondents did express difficulty or frustration what this meant in terms of “walking away” or choosing to stay varied considerably.</p>

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	<p>More details about Catholic identity and participation can be found in section 7 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Fr Bob Maguire was able to put into practice the teachings of Jesus in South Melbourne. Why are the 'princes of the church' not more like Jesus in who they care?</p>	<p>A significant majority (85%) of all respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement 'Clericalism (the misuse of authority and power by male clerics) is damaging the Catholic Church'. Open responses were highly critical of clericalism. Many respondents noted the negative impact of clericalism on individual communities and the Catholic Church more broadly. More details about the impact of clericalism and the misuse of power can be found in section 10.5 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>What has Pope Francis' response been to the recommendations presented to him?</p>	<p>The Synod 2021-2023 International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW) Synthesis was submitted by the Catholic Women Speak Network to the synodal process. It is available at: https://catholicwomenspeak.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Synod-2021-23-International-Survey-of-Catholic-Women-Synthesis-Full-Report-Sept-2022.pdf.</p>
<p>Will there be another survey available to all Catholic women?</p>	<p>In general, the examination of Catholic women's lived experience and faith participation is under-researched. The ISCW is a landmark study that gives empirical evidence of the marginalisation of women in the Catholic Church. The research team will continue to research women's lived experience and faith participation.</p>
<p>How do we take the next steps in putting these recommendations into action?</p>	<p>The research team are open to further dialogue with church leaders and other interested individuals and groups regarding the findings and recommendations of the ISCW.</p>
<p>What can be done to ensure that the recommendations are implemented and not simply ignored?</p>	<p>The ISCW provides empirical evidence of the marginalisation of women in the Catholic Church. The research team are open to and encourage further dialogue regarding the findings and recommendations.</p>
<p>To whom do these recommendations go, and who deliberates on them? What authority do the recommendations have with church leaders?</p>	<p>The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings is publicly available through the University of Newcastle library link: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189</p> <p>The Synod 2021-2023 International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW) Synthesis was submitted by the Catholic Women Speak Network to the synodal process. It is available at:</p>

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	<p>https://catholicwomenspeak.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Synod-2021-23-International-Survey-of-Catholic-Women-Synthesis-Full-Report-Sept-2022.pdf</p> <p>The ISCW carries the authority of evidence based qualitative social research.</p>
<p>The recommendations are strong and appropriate. However, how can we ensure that the Synod on Synodality considers such common sense and equitable reforms?</p>	<p>The research team have had discussions with Sr Nathalie Becquart, under-secretary and consultor to the Synod of Bishops, and are confident that the Synod 2021-2023 International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW) Synthesis informed the synodal process. It is available at: https://catholicwomenspeak.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Synod-2021-23-International-Survey-of-Catholic-Women-Synthesis-Full-Report-Sept-2022.pdf</p> <p>Sr Nathalie Becquart has also indicated she has read the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>14 recommendations are well structured One is of essence. Women at all levels of decision making in the church. And soon. When is this likely to occur?</p>	<p>Optimistically, immediately. Realistically, small incremental changes are being made towards this goal. More details about what respondents said about women in leadership can be found in section 10.1 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>I think the survey is great, but.... the largest?? 17,200 is not very many people from over 100 countries surely?</p>	<p>To date the research team have found no larger global study of Catholic women. More details about other studies of Catholic women can be found in section 4.8 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Why can't fundamental Church teachings just be left alone? These are unchanging truths of our faith and assenting to these truths is essential to being Catholic.</p>	<p>Most respondents supported reform in the Catholic Church. What reform meant to respondents however did vary. Details regarding understandings of reform by participants can be found in section 9 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>It appears the church is trying to go back to a time before Vatican II. Power is the issue. Who can address this?</p>	<p>The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings makes recommendations which address progress towards a more inclusive church. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>

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<p>It is disappointing to hear how people working for the Church are underpaid and not respected. How can this be addressed?</p>	<p>The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings makes a recommendation which addresses workplace and economic injustice (recommendation 11) http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Were there any findings which surprised you, were new to you -many of the findings seem to have been expressed one way or another over many, many years?</p>	<p>The research team has many years of experience researching women's experiences in Catholicism. The findings provide empirical evidence of much of what we already know about women's marginalisation. We were surprised by the age differentials in some responses.</p>
<p>God seems to be missing in all the responses to the research. Where is God in this? Equality is from God.</p>	<p>Many women mentioned described their relationship to the Catholic Church in terms of a relationship with Jesus. The need for reform and a safe and inclusive church was often posited in terms of a return to gospel values.</p>
<p>How can we overcome the toxic masculinity of the church?</p>	<p>The ISCW did not ask questions about toxic masculinity. The prevalence of sexism and misogyny in church contexts, clericalism, and the misuse of power are addressed in the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. A number of recommendations address the issue of sexism in the Church. The full report is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Why is the commentary using the term Religious, which excludes non-religious forms of consecrated life?</p>	<p>Please see the Appendix B: Glossary of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings for definitions of key terms. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189</p>
<p>How can we get involved?</p>	<p>The ISCW provides empirical evidence of the marginalisation of women in the Catholic Church. The research team are open to and encourage further dialogue regarding the findings and recommendations. Please share the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings widely. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>I wonder, how can we, as women, act on recommendation 1, to bridge the divide of our diversity and value one another.</p>	<p>The research team are open to further dialogue with church leaders and other interested individuals and groups regarding the findings and recommendations of the ISCW. We are supportive of the role of constructive dialogue in bridging divides.</p>
<p>Does the analysis give us any insights into how representative the respondents were of the range of Catholic women's views and experiences?</p>	<p>Respondents were recruited across multiple networks and forums worldwide and the significant response rate and detailed answers to the open questions provides an important representation of Catholic women and their experience of contemporary Catholicism. That the ISCW engaged so many women from so many countries reflects a successful recruitment process and the shared concerns of</p>

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	women on the current state of church culture and gender politics. It is an important database for future research and a resource for church organisations to understand the central issues and concerns of Catholic women across the world.
How is your research being funded? Do you need more financial support to fast track the work?	The research team are currently exploring options for funding ongoing analysis. Please contact us for further information. Contact details are published in the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings widely. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189 .
How will recommendations be implemented-How change mindsets of priests who openly 'poopoo' opinions of nuns and women including those at doctorate level etc?	The ISCW provides strong empirical evidence of the marginalisation of women in the Catholic Church. The research team are open to and encourage further dialogue regarding the findings and recommendations.
Very discouraging that only 1 bishop acknowledged the report. What hope is there that any changes will occur?	The research team are open to further dialogue with church leaders and other interested individuals and groups regarding the findings and recommendations of the ISCW.
If every woman did not go to church or help in any way, then the male Church may take notice? A drastic step I know	Many respondents called for the gifts and ministries of women to be accepted and valued in their local parishes and dioceses. Some respondents mentioned withdrawing the work of women in parishes, for example: If every woman in every parish stopped cleaning, cooking, dusting, typing, directing, singing, working in the nursery, teaching classes, answering the phone, etc., for just ONE week, every parish would have to close. Yet, why do women have so little real power? i.e., financial, decision-making, leadership (over 70 years, Germany).
Who actually received the final report?	The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings is publicly available through the University of Newcastle library link: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189 The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings was emailed to every diocese/bishop in Australia as well as multiple Catholic organisations. It was widely discussed in the Australian and International media. The Synod 2021-2023 International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW) Synthesis was submitted by the Catholic Women Speak Network to the synodal process. It is available at: https://catholicwomenspeak.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Synod-2021-23-International-

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	Survey-of-Catholic-Women-Synthesis-Full-Report-Sept-2022.pdf
Kathleen and Tracy, of your recommendations, what would be the first change that you would like to see for greater appreciation and involvement of women.	It is very hard to pick just one. Several recommendations require no changes to church teaching or doctrine and can be implemented immediately.
How can we help?	The ISCW provides empirical evidence of the marginalisation of women in the Catholic Church. The research team are open to and encourage further dialogue regarding the findings and recommendations. Please share the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings widely. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189 .
What about a resolution to be adopted by the Synod to recognise Catholic Women Priests (of which there are already hundreds globally)?	The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings make recommendations which address the ordination of women to the priesthood and/or diaconate (recommendation 4). It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189 .
The women who completed the survey were still committed to the Church. How could we find out more from those who have left and provide healing?	Some 12% of respondents were unsure or did not agree their Catholic identity was important to them. This is one of the cohorts we will be investigating further.
Are conservative women in our parishes a situation that needs to be addressed as well?	The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings recommendations that the diversity of women be recognised and respected (recommendation 1). It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189 .
Are you in conversation with the women attending the Synod? Any chance you may be included? Your commitment gives me hope	<p>We have had discussions with Sr Nathalie Becquart, under-secretary and consultor to the Synod of Bishops, and are confident that the Synod 2021-2023 International Survey of Catholic Women (ISCW) Synthesis informed the synodal process. It is available at: https://catholicwomenspeak.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Synod-2021-23-International-Survey-of-Catholic-Women-Synthesis-Full-Report-Sept-2022.pdf</p> <p>Sr Nathalie Becquart has also indicated she has read the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p> <p>The process for selection of women who will be voting at the synod has not been announced for Australia.</p>

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<p>I think that women in the priesthood may be a step too far at this stage. How about concentrating on women in the diaconate first? Is this achievable?</p>	<p>The ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings make recommendations which address the ordination of women to the priesthood and/or diaconate (recommendation 4). It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p> <p>Optimistically, yes, ordination of women to the diaconate is achievable immediately. Realistically, there has been little progress despite strong evidence of historical precedence.</p>
<p>Why do you think that more younger women didn't see the need for radical reform?</p>	<p>The research team have several hypotheses and are working on building understandings of the responses of younger women. Context was important. We plan to investigate the differences between older and younger respondents in more detail.</p>
<p>Do older women feel the reforms of Vatican II have not eventuated?</p>	<p>Some respondents did comment on a lack of progress towards the reforms of Vatican II. The research team plan to investigate the differences between older and younger respondents in more detail.</p>
<p>When will Australian Bishops make a public apology for the abuse that took place in the Church as per the recommendation of the Plenary Council?</p>	<p>Exactly 8 out of 10 (80%) of all respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement 'Church leaders are not doing enough to address the perpetration and cover-up of sexual abuse'. More details about what respondents said about the perpetration and cover-up of sexual abuse can be found in section 10.5 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Are younger women more accepting of the Church as it is?</p>	<p>The research team have several hypotheses and are working on building understandings of the responses of younger women. Context was important. We plan to investigate the differences between older and younger respondents in more detail.</p>
<p>What are your thoughts on younger women seeming to be less interested in more radical calls for change?</p>	<p>The research team have several hypotheses and are working on building understandings of the responses of younger women. Context was important. We plan to investigate the differences between older and younger respondents in more detail.</p>
<p>What about education of priests? I was told by a priest he did not want me in his parish!</p>	<p>The ministry, leadership, and governance of clergy, including deacons, priests, and bishops in parishes and dioceses was consistently identified in open responses as highly problematic and in need of urgent reform. Respondents wrote about the impacts of abuses of power and authority on individual communities and the Church more broadly. Some shared experiences of being overlooked and</p>

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	<p>marginalised as the result of autocratic clerical governance. More details about what respondents said clerical leadership can be found in section 10.10 of the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>What could be the attitudes of the Australian Bishops towards the survey results and the recommendations?</p>	<p>The research team are open to further dialogue with church leaders and other interested individuals and groups regarding the findings and recommendations of the ISCW.</p>
<p>It seems from the questions that are at the top suggest we are asking Who is listening? Or are we just talking among ourselves?</p>	<p>The ISCW provides empirical evidence of the marginalisation of women in the Catholic Church. The research team are open to and encourage further dialogue regarding the findings and recommendations. Please share the ISCW: Analysis and report of key findings widely. It is available at: http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1468189.</p>
<p>Is it possible to determine the backgrounds of the young respondents? My daughters, their Catholic friends didn't do the Survey and they want reform</p>	<p>The open responses will tell us more about the cohort of young women who responded. The research team have several hypotheses and are working on building understandings of the responses of younger women. Context was important. We plan to investigate the differences between older and younger respondents in more detail.</p>
<p>The WUCWO General Assembly meets this week. Maria Lía Zervino, President General of WUCWO was appointed in 2022 to the Dicastery for Bishops. Has it been sent?</p>	<p>Dr McEwan presented the findings and recommendations of the ISCW at an International Women's Day event co-hosted by WUCWO and the Australian Embassy to the Holy See which Maria Lía Zervino attended. She has a copy of the report, and the research team has contacted her with an invitation to collaborate further.</p>