

*Connect - Communicate -
Commit*

Exploring the Context of Faith & Marriage Today

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Spiritual Advisor since 2009



**TEAM 19 BENDIGO
VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA**



OVERVIEW

CONNECT

Context

COMMUNICATE

Research

COMMIT

So ???

TEAMS
OPPORTUNITIES



Change of Era not Era of Change

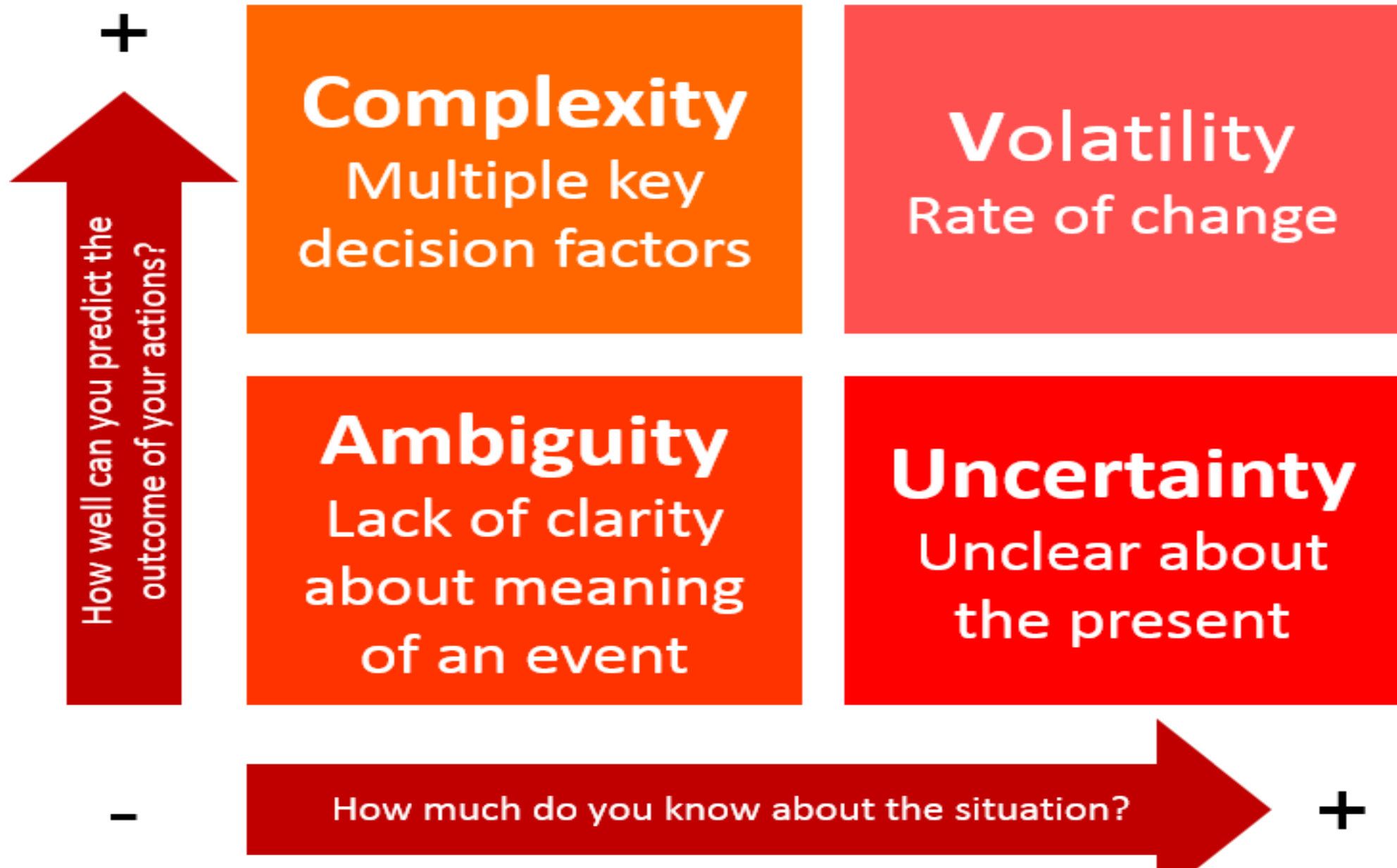
Pope Francis

Context of SYNODALITY

CANNOT BE BUSINESS AS USUAL – Archbishop Coleridge (Dec, 2017)

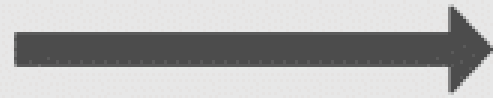


VUCA



VUCA

Volatility



Vision

Uncertainty



Understanding

Complexity



Clarity

Ambiguity



Agility

Insights to Australian Society – Hugh Mackay

(September 2021)

Average Australian household is 2.5 – greatest household growth group is single households → will soon be 33% of all households

35-40% of contemporary marriages end in divorce

- Disruptive features of life and social fragmentation
- Birth rate is down from 2.1 → 1.7

IT Influence

- People are connected but lonely (18-25)

The erosion of social cohesion & identity politics

Social mobility – people are moving house every 6 years

Busyness has become a badge of pride – it is the great enemy of social cohesion

3 Epidemics:

- **LONELINESS**
(25% Australian Adults)
- **ANXIETY**
- **DEPRESSION**

Australia Talks National Survey 2021

60,000 respondents

Marriage is outdated –

AGREED: all (29%)

women (33%) men (24%)

- younger women, are more likely to think marriage is outdated (43% -18→39)

Since 2019:

11% increase on belief that marriage is outdated

**Marriage is outdated –
51% DISAGREED
20% neutral**

*Most people don't think having children is necessary to be fulfilled →
2 in 3 respondents agreed: 74% women & 48% men*

Most Australians did not think they would be happier if they had or had more children:

61% women & 55% men

Australian women are having fewer children and having them later in life

Housing affordability is a contributing factor → 25 yr old woman who goes on to have children can expect to earn \$1million less over her lifetime compared with a woman without children

Impact of having children on climate change – a consideration for younger couples

Snapshot of Marriage in Australia

2019

ABS

- In 2019, **113,815 marriages** were registered and **49,116 divorces** were granted in Australia.
- There were **5,507 same-sex marriages** in 2019, accounting for **4.8%** of all marriages.
- Provisional data released for January to June 2020 shows a **31.9% decrease** in marriages.
- There were 113,815 registered marriages in Australia in 2019, **a decrease of 5,373 (4.5%)** compared to 2018 (119,188).

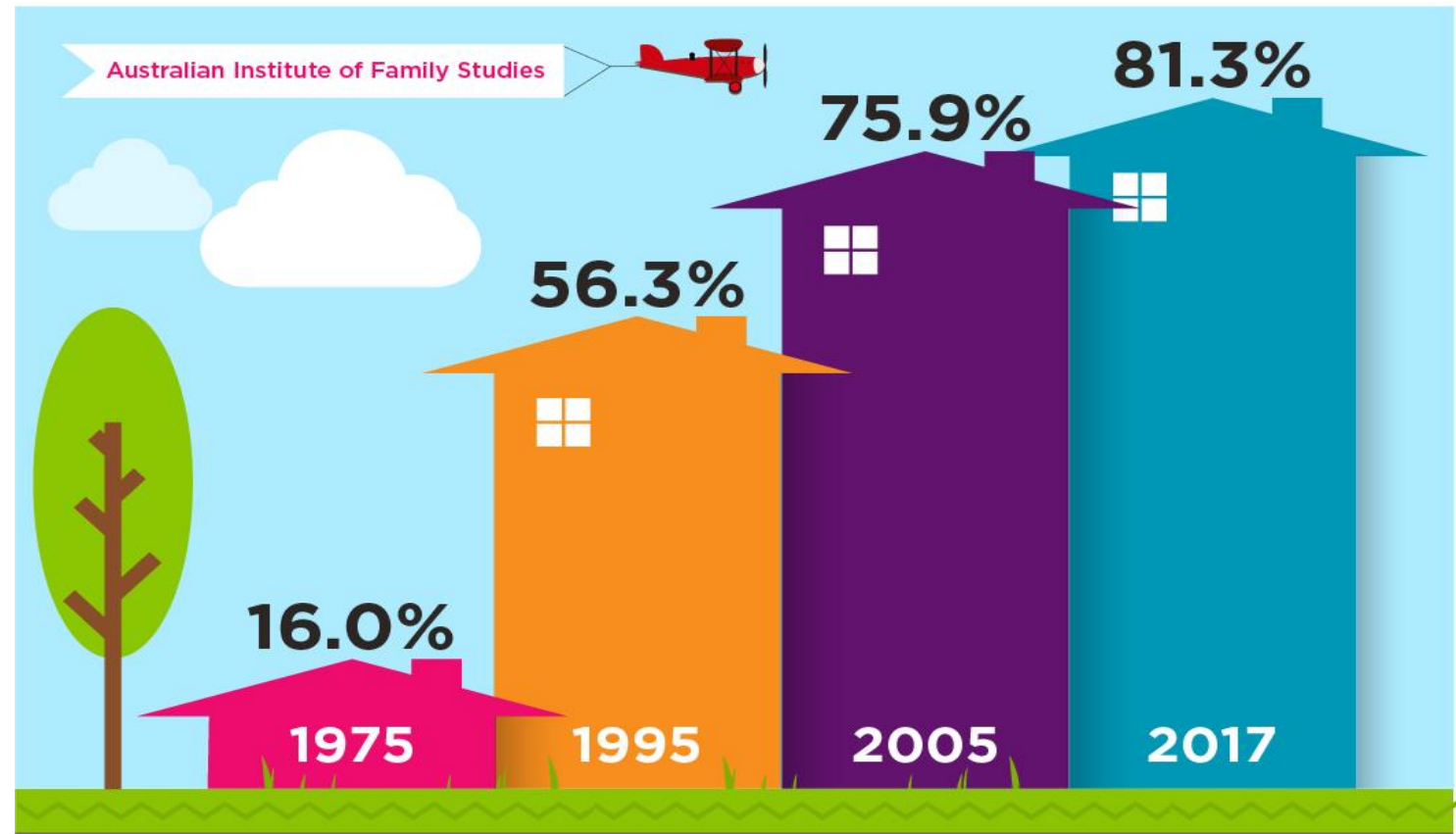
Australian
Institute of
Family
Studies 2018

LIVING TOGETHER BEFORE MARRIAGE

from 1975 to 2017

**Most couples now live
together before
getting married.**

sources: ABS (various years) Marriages and Divorces Australia.



Proportion of marriages preceded by cohabitation

Australian Institute of Family Studies 2018

RELIGIOUS vs CIVIL WEDDINGS

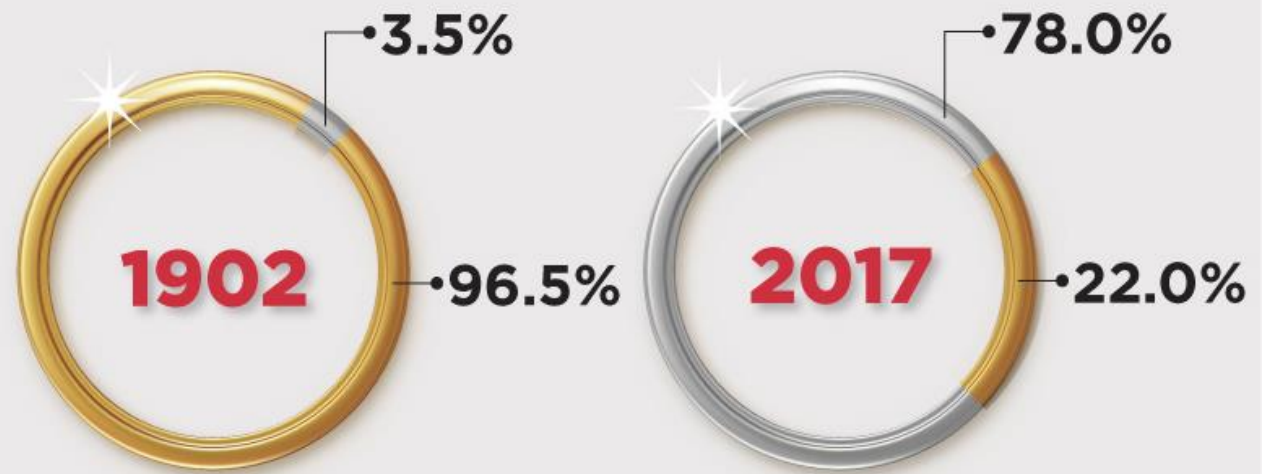
from 1902 to 2017

Increasingly marriages are
being performed by
civil celebrants.

sources: ABS (various years) Marriages and Divorces Australia.
Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. Australian Demography Bulletin.



Australian Institute of Family Studies



Couples married by civil celebrant



Couples married by minister of religion



Influence of Media – Social Media & Reality Shows

Inter-Faith & Inter-Cultural Marriages



Mixed Religion Marriage in Canada & Australia: A Gift for the People of God

2018 Research

Ray Temmerman

(La Croix – 27 August 2021)

- Canada: **approx. 10%** of all marriages *recorded in Catholic Church* are Mixed Religion Marriages → Australia: **approx. 9%**
- Canada: **approx. 43%** of all marriages involving a Catholic are Mixed Religion Marriages → Australia: **approx. 35%**
- **CHALLENGE & OPPORTUNITY**
- The Catholic Church in Australia and Canada, as institution, has little connection to a large portion of marriages taking place in which only one spouse is Catholic
- Couples are unknown to Catholic clergy and hence beyond the capacity of Catholic clergy to reach out to them – thus any program inviting such couples to explore, reflect on, and tell their story of gift cannot be focused on the institutional Church

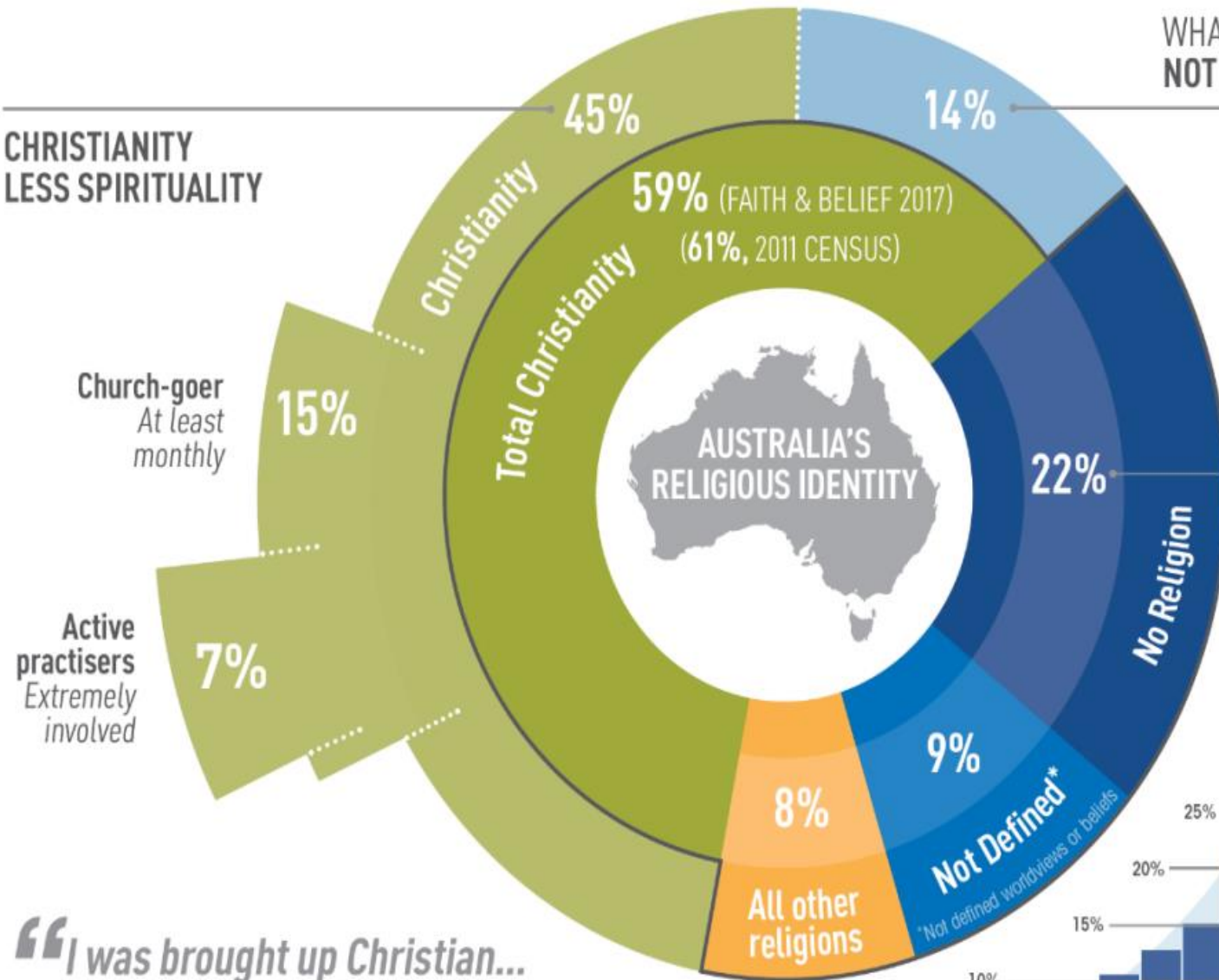
*So what is the
picture of belief in
Australia?*

*Particular focus on
young people*

Research Focus



CHRISTIANITY LESS SPIRITUALITY



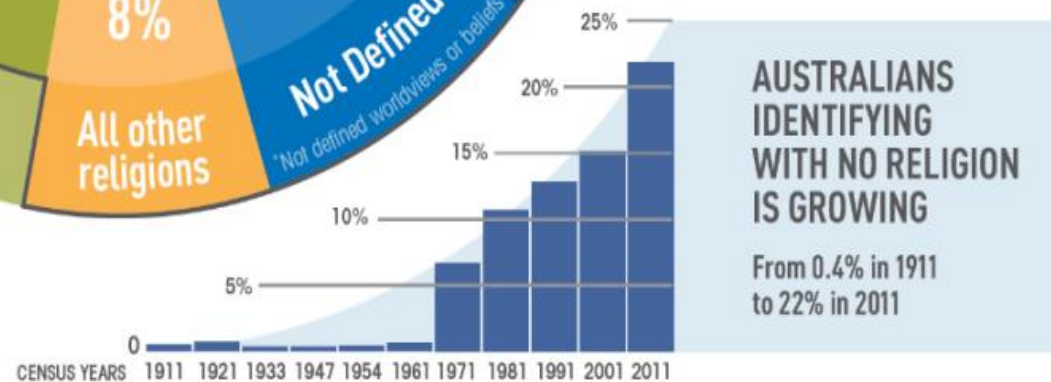
**“I was brought up Christian...
I just don't identify with
a religion anymore.”**

WHAT DO THE SPIRITUAL BUT NOT RELIGIOUS* BELIEVE? (TOP 3)

- 1 'There is an ultimate purpose and meaning' **36%**
- 2 Inward journey of self-discovery **26%**
- 3 Mixture of religious beliefs **22%**

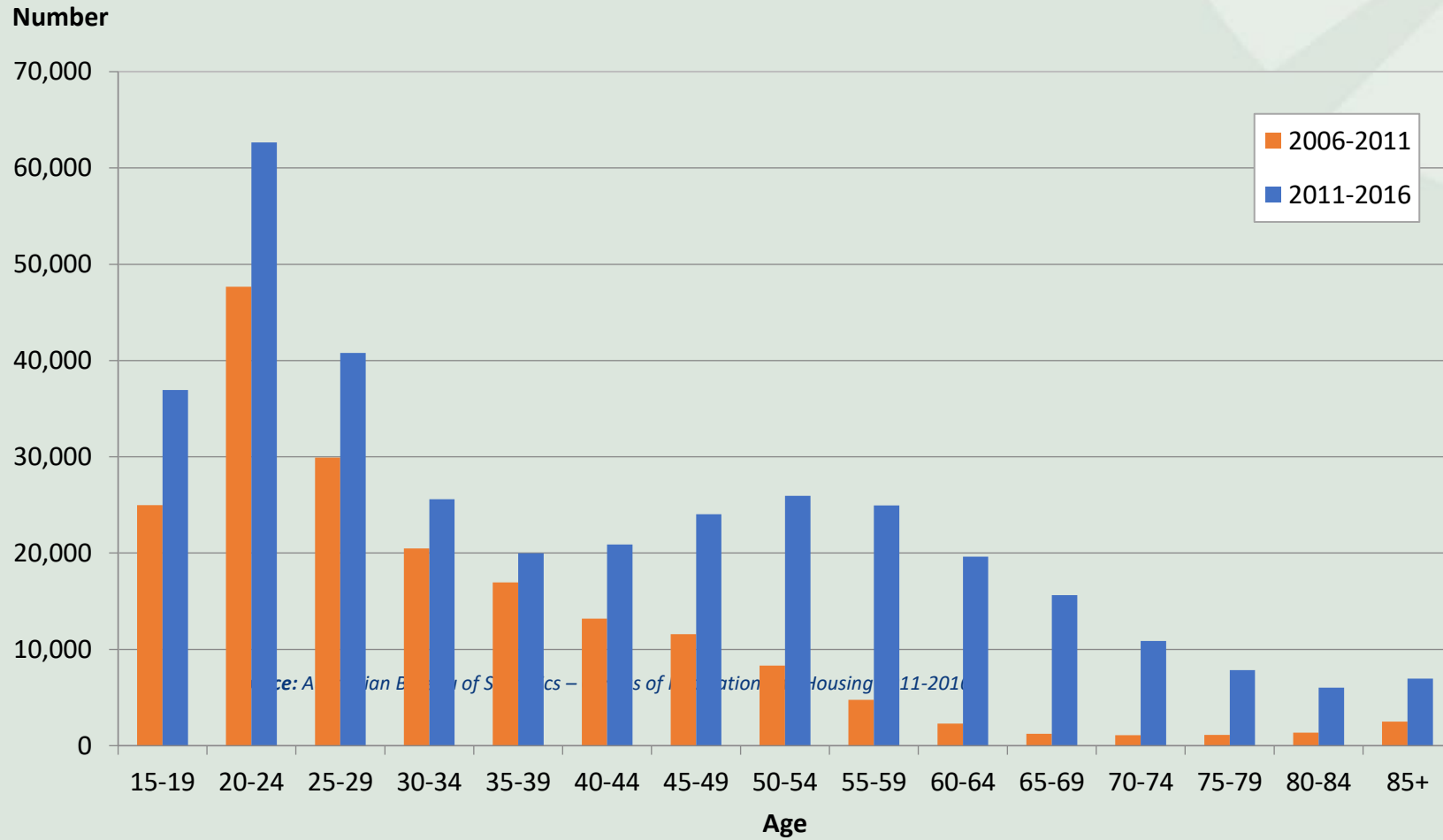
WHY NO RELIGION? (TOP 3)

- 1 Prefer science and evidence based **49%**
- 2 'Religion is a crutch for the weak' **18%**
- 3 'Religion is outdated and traditional' **14%**



*When given a 'spiritual but not religious' option, 14% of 'Total Christianity' moves to this new category.

Australian Census Catholics dis-identifying 2006-2011 and 2011-2016



Putting Life Together Survey (2011-2018)

12,000 students

Source:
Hughes & Reid (June 2019)

How Australian Young People Understand & Experience God & the Influences on their Thinking

- Family & friends have greatest influence on young people's thinking about life.
 - *Younger students more influenced by family*
 - *Older students tend to rate importance of friends more highly*
- Students approach to Religious Education & other aspects of school life depends a great deal on home background

	Knowing Jesus helps make me a better person	Religious faith helps shape how I live my life
Definitely true	23%	15%
Probably true	20%	13%
Not sure, don't know	24%	21%
Probably not true	11%	18%
Definitely not true	22%	33%

Source: Putting Life Together Surveys, 2011-2018.

Australian Catholic Youth Survey (2017 - 2018)

15,000 respondents aged 16 - 29

Hughes & Reid (2019)

FOCUS GROUPS:

- **81% aged 16-18 Secondary School Students**
 - *University aged young people: aged 19 -22*
 - *Young adults: aged 23 - 29*
- **45% of students aged 16-18 attended Church at least sometimes**
- **77% influenced mostly by family**
- **Listed youth groups, mission & outreach & Mass and liturgical gatherings as top 3 positive activities**

HIGHLIGHTED CONCERNS OF YOUNG PEOPLE:

- **Mental health**
- Questions around
- **Identity**
 - **Loneliness**
 - **Relationships & friendships**
 - **The direction of society**
 - **Living out their faith in a secular world**

National Church Life Survey (2016)

- **13% church attendees were aged 16 – 29**

Highest numbers were from

- Pentecostal Churches (23%);
- Christian Reformed Church (22%);
- Baptist (18%) and
- Presbyterian churches (16%)

Australia's Generation Z Study

- **Year 9 & 10 students across 3 states**
 - 52% do not identify with a religion
 - 12% attend church services weekly or more often while 58% never attend
 - However, 67% believe in God, a higher being or life force;
 - 24% have no belief with 9% being unsure

In Summary – Generation Z Study (% of all Australian Teenagers) is:

This worldly – *no space in their worldview for anything religious, spiritual or non-material*: **23%**

Religiously
Committed:
17%

Seekers: **8%**

Spiritual but
not Religious:
18%

Indifferent: **15%**

Nominally
Religious:
15%

In general,
much diversity among Australian teenagers in matters of faith, spirituality and religion

*So, what does this
means for us?*

Our marriage?

Our Family?

Our relationships?



Final Word – Fr Caffarel →



Marriage is:

*'the only
community
founded on a
sacrament'*

*We are called to
be Prophets of
Love*

BREAKOUT ROOMS**

*Discuss the Challenges
& Opportunities:*

- for Teams*
- for Church*

20 MINS →

- Note key ideas in
CHAT COLUMN*





What are the trends emerging from the Chat from the Breakout Conversations?

How can we walk together as Teams?

A message from Team members in Cebu

- Being in Teams has somehow eased the desolation and boredom brought by the Covid pandemic.
- Through the virtual meetings and social media group chat, members share information and opinion regarding lockdown protocols, symptoms, cases updates and vaccinations.
- Prayer groups are activated whenever a Team member or a relative is infected. Members reach out to those affected for any assistance and to comfort them in anyway.
- We know it is still a long way to go, but having our strong faith in God & the Teams support, we all can make it through.

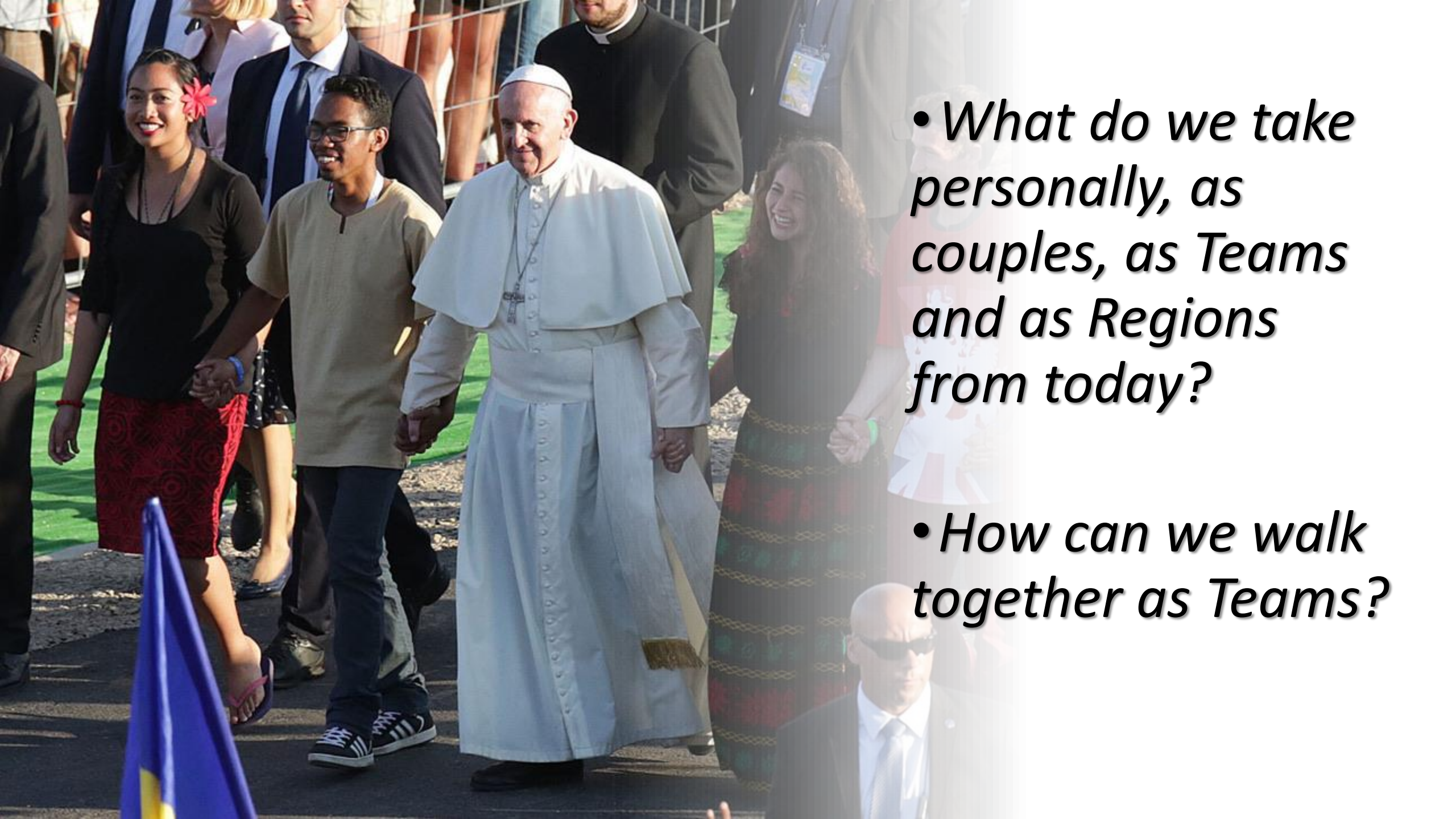
BREAKOUT ROOMS

***Looking forward -
what are the signs of
hope?***

20 MINS →

- Note key ideas &
Questions for Q&A
in CHAT COLUMN***





• What do we take personally, as couples, as Teams and as Regions from today?

• How can we walk together as Teams?

A word cloud featuring the phrase "Thank You" in numerous languages. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with "Thank You" being the largest and most central. Other prominent words include "Merci", "Gracias", "Danke", "Takk", "Grazie", "Mesi", "Xiexie", "Dziakuju", "Kiitos", "Barakallahufik", "aDank", "Koszonom", "Marakore", "Buznyg", "ThintKo", "Blagodaram", "Mahododo", "Merce", "Taiku", "Dakujem", "Terimakasih", "Rahmat", "Tanemirt", "Tenki", "Gracias", "Spacibo", "Danke", "Gracias", "TananVaga", "Acio", "Dankie", "Tak", "Sagolon", "Motashakkeram", "KopKhunKha", "Gracie", "CamOn", "Hamnida", "Saha", "Salamat", "Bayarlalaa", "Nirringazzyak", "Hvala", "Arigato", "NajisTuke", "Faleminderit", "Etfharisto", "Grandmerce", "Hvala", "Arigato", "NajisTuke", "Faleminderit", "Etfharisto", "Grandmerce".