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Women: migration, culture and religious experience

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SUMMARY

This thesis investigates the effects of migration on Catholic women immigrants' practice of religion and rearing children in their faith in Australia, and examines the importance of cultural factors affecting religious experience by a study of the First Holy Communion event in the original homeland and in Australia.

There are two parts. A literature review considers the issues of culture, ethnicity, religion and migration in general, together with the Church's catholicity and response to migration, officially and locally. This is relevant to migrant women's religious experience in a culturally-diversified Church here.

The case study involved women of Lebanese migrant background and Anglophone Australian-born women and their children's experience of First Holy Communion within an Australian school setting. Despite basic similarities worldwide, the Catholic faith is acquired in a specific cultural context which affects attitudes and experiences. The importance of cultural factors was found to be in the emotive response to religious celebrations. For both groups, underlying beliefs, aspirations and anxieties were similar, but attitudes to the style of the First Communion celebration differed. Reasons for this were found in the two socio-religious backgrounds at the familial and communal levels.

Wide scope remains for further research into sociological aspects of cultural diversity and religious issues in the Church, particularly communications, adult religious education and lay ministries.
This thesis investigates the relationship between the migration process and women's practice of religion and rearing their children in that religion in their new homeland. It seeks to identify the importance of cultural factors affecting womens' experience of religious events by comparing the meaning of one significant religious celebration in their original homeland and in Australia.

The initial interest in this area arose from a general concern for women and their families, and especially from parish experience among women from a wide range of "ethnic" backgrounds, many of whom had spoken of their concern about rearing children in their religion in today's society. After discussing these ideas with a migrant priest, the decision was made to give special focus to the mothers' experience of their children's First Holy Communion in this country.

In the Catholic Church, First Holy Communion has considerable religious and social significance. As part of the rites of initiation it is an important occasion celebrating the incorporation of new members into the Church's central act of worship, the Mass (also referred to as the Eucharist).

Since the Catholic Church in Australia is even more ethnically-diverse than is the general population (at the 1981 census 23.9 per cent of the Catholic population was overseas-born whereas for the general population the figure was 20.6 per cent, e.g. Pittarello, A. 1987:7), events such as First Communion evoke various responses according to the different expectations and customs of diverse "ethnic" groups concerned, including those of the dominant Anglophone Australian-born group. Hence this study concerns practical issues in Catholic life at the parish level.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Religion as a source for supplying the meaning of life and the physical environment is an integral part of culture. It is acquired in a certain social milieu that employs its own symbols and rituals. Consequently, when a person migrates, (s)he may suffer cultural dissonance even among co-religionists of another place. The main issues of this thesis are the effects of migration on women, specifically concerning their practice of the Catholic religion and rearing their children in that religion in a different socio-religious environment. It will seek to identify cultural factors affecting the experience of religious events and to compare the meaning of one significant event in the original homeland and in Australia.

By investigating the cultural factors affecting migrant women's practice of religion here, this study will pursue further Ravalico's finding that along ethnic lines there were differences of perception and adaptation in religious matters among the groups she surveyed (Ravalico, P. 1987:52). Her data also showed that the women considered Australia as a "less good" place in which to rear children religiously, which she linked with their strong feelings for public religious piety in their homelands (p.47). Both these issues will be more intensely researched in the case study.

Related issues concern the cultural plurality of the Catholic Church vis-à-vis the traditional structures and practices that met the needs of an earlier, largely mono-cultural Church. Some writers have indicated that today Churches need to change/modify structures and approaches to meet the challenges of cultural plurality (e.g. Hally, C. 1980b:8 and Cox, D. 1986:119-120). The particular focus will be the First Holy Communion event for the women and their children.
1.1 Thesis Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are fourfold:

a) to investigate the relationship between the migration process and migrant women's practice of religion;

b) to investigate what migrant mothers feel are the differences in rearing their children in accordance with their religious traditions here and in the original homeland;

c) to identify the importance of cultural factors and traditions affecting the way migrant women experience religious events in Australia;

d) to compare the meaning of a key religious event - First Holy Communion - in the migrants' original homeland and in Australia.

1.2 Main Questions and Hypotheses

Regarding the affects of migration on the women's religious practice in Australia, this thesis will investigate which elements have changed, which are the same and why. Do they find significant differences in rearing children religiously here? What are they? How do the women respond?

Although Catholics worldwide have the same beliefs, the same hierarchic authority structure and the same sacraments, the understanding and practice of the faith are expressed somewhat differently in various cultures. Many immigrants came from pre-industrial communities, or those newly-emerging from such, where the various aspects of life, including religion, are more integrated than in technologically "advanced" societies. Moreover, in mono-religious societies, religious practices are part of the general social scene, and religious celebrations are public social celebrations (Pittarello, A. 1980:73 ff). Therefore one could hypothesize that the cultural factors affecting such migrant women's religious experience in Australia would be largely concerned with communal behaviour. Likewise, one could expect that for the First Holy Communion event, the social aspects would predominate
over personal ones, i.e. "the rite of passage" rather than "the personal encounter with Christ".

On the other hand, in Australia, the small nuclear family has been the norm since European settlement (Burns, A. & Goodnow, G. 1985:22). The Catholic Church in Australia began inauspiciously as a predominantly Irish minority group that had endured persecution in the homeland then in the settlement years here. Moreover, Australia has become generally regarded as a secular society, i.e. religion is kept in the private arena. For such historic reasons it can be suggested that a more personal, devotional attitude to religious matters prevailed among Australian Catholics. Therefore one could expect that a more personal approach to First Holy Communion would still be common, because, although the Vatican Council II reasserted the communal nature of the liturgy and sacramental celebrations (Const. on Sacred Liturgy #26, Abbott, W. ed. 1966:147), common observation is that religious attitudes are very slow to change.

To date, Ravalico's Transition or Regression? (1987) is the only survey to have addressed the issue of migrant Catholic women and religion. The present thesis will investigate further, with one ethnic group, her findings that (a) migrant women's perception of, and adaptation to, the new socio-religious environment differed along ethnic lines (p.52) and (b) that generally migrant women felt that Australia was a "less good" country than their homelands in which to rear children religiously (p.47).

Seeing that the Catholic Church "is bound to no particular form of human culture, nor to any political, economic or social system" (Gaudium et Spes #42) but is a "bond of unity" for diverse peoples, other related issues concern the cultural plurality of the Catholic Church in Australia vis-à-vis the official English language, Latin Rite liturgy and traditional parish structures that met the needs of the original Church of predominantly Irish background. An ethnically-diverse parish can be seen as the Universal Church in microcosm.
Current Roman directives (Rome 1978) state that the parish is responsible for pastoral care of immigrants - none of whom is ever an outsider - and it must become "still more of a community" as it reaches out to minister to its people (Rome 1978:12). In the light of these guidelines this thesis will investigate the women's experiences particularly concerning Mass and First Communion for their children. What are their expectations? What is the meaning of Mass and Communion for them? What are the cultural differences here affecting First Holy Communion? How do they feel about them? Can/do such celebrations promote unity across cultural plurality?

1.3 Methodology
There are two parts: a Literature Review and a Case Study.

1.3.1 A LITERATURE REVIEW
No previous research on the First Communion event could be located.

One survey has been conducted on migrant women's religious needs and expectations in Australia, by Patricia Ravalico, which was prepared for the *First National Convention on Pastoral Care in Multicultural Australia* held in the University of Melbourne in August, 1987, sponsored by the Scalabrinian Fathers. (It is significant that the Scalabrinians, founded to serve the needs of migrants, took this initiative since it is an example of the Church's on-going concern for migrant peoples.)

The terms "Multicultural Australia" and "multiculturalism" appear in the literature. "Multiculturalism" is a term of social policy in Australia. "Multiculturalism" became part of the official Government policy with the Galbally Report, "*Migrant Services and Programs*" in 1978. Since then it has been taken up both as a descriptive term about the fashioning of Australian society and changes to the delivery of services in order to ensure access to all
categories, see for example, Kalantzis, M. & Cope, B., 1980. The issues of "multiculturalism" are being debated at present.

The literature reviewed covers a wide field. It is prefaced by a brief consideration of issues relevant to the study: culture and religion; culture and ethnicity; the development of "ethnic" groups in Australia and some effects of migration on women.

Since the Catholic Church worldwide is both the general context of the Church in Australia and the source whence the immigrants have come, the literature review continues with a brief consideration of the Church's catholicity as articulated by the Second Vatican Council. One aspect of that catholicity is the variety of theological thought within it, hence a selection of modern views frequently encountered. Throughout its long history the Church has responded pastorally to migration phenomena, and such directives, especially the modern ones, are reviewed. Then follows a consideration of the response of the Catholic Church in Australia to post World War II immigration and of related research and critiques. Ethnic diversity is a feature of most mainline Christian Churches, so the response of other denominations is reviewed with special reference to selected articles in The Cultured Pearl (1986), the first book dealing with religious issues in "multicultural" Australia, produced under the auspices of the Victorian Council of Churches.

1.3.2 A CASE STUDY

Data was collected also by means of a Case Study in order to expand the findings of the literature. The objectives were:

a) to investigate the relationship between the migration process and women's practice of religion in Australia;

b) to discover what migrant mothers feel are the differences in rearing their children in their religion here and in the original homeland;
c) to identify the importance of cultural factors, affecting the way women experience religious events in Australia;

d) to compare the meaning of a significant religious event - First Holy Communion - in the original homeland and in Australia.

The Case Study involved six women of Lebanese background who experienced their own First Communion in their country of origin and a comparable group of Australian-born women whose children were experiencing the same sacramental programme in a Catholic parish school.

Data was collected by means of in-depth personal interviews based on a written questionnaire which was basically the same for both groups (Appendix I).

Selected key informants from the parish team and school staff were interviewed also. The questionnaire for these persons involved selected items from that for the women plus a few questions specific to their perspective (Appendix II).

To gain a complete picture of the whole First Communion event in the parish, the researcher observed all relevant meetings with parents and was a participant-observer at all related sacramental celebrations, and observed the classroom preparation of the children.

Finally there were evaluative meetings with both groups of women after the event, and where possible, the children.
PART A: A LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2: CULTURE-RELIGION-ETHNICITY-MIGRATION AND WOMEN

2.1 Culture and Religion

The concept of religion has varied meanings: a "particular system of faith and worship" such as the Christian, Muslim religions and institutions; "human recognition of superhuman controlling power especially of a personal God or gods ..." and consequent behaviour and attitudes; or some thing which one makes the focus and motive for life, e.g. power. (Concise Oxford Dictionary, Revised ed. 1976). Religion and religious matters can be emotive and contentious. Attitudes vary according to whether the stance taken is that of committed believer, unbeliever or social scientist.

Anthropologists consider religion in the context of cultures which are the systems peoples have devised to meet the needs of their "physical, social and ideational" environments. Religion relates to the integrative needs of the latter and the human search for meaning and purpose in creation and in life. Integrative needs "find expression ... in symbolic systems" which operate simultaneously on the cognitive, emotive and directive levels (Hally, C. 1986:30) - hence their impact. Geertz discusses the functions of religion concerning the basic human problems of meaning, suffering and evil. He sees religion as "sociologically interesting" because it helps shape society (Geertz, C. 1966:14-36). Spiro considers that belief in "superhuman beings" is basic to religion which is a cultural institution whereby humans interact with such superhuman beings to "satisfy cognitive, substantive and expressive desires" (Spiro, M. 1966:96-109).

The concept of culture is much debated - Hally (1986) notes "some 250 definitions" offered by anthropologists. Kalantzis and Cope suggest that the ambiguity of the current usage of the term arises because historically, two
traditions of the meaning for the term "culture" developed with industrialism. One, a holistic approach, originated in the Enlightenment and continued through cultural anthropology, eventually viewing culture as a people's whole way of life. The other separated the realms of "society", "economics" and "culture" and assigned subjective elements to the latter (Kalantzis, M. & Cope, B. 1980:24-27).

The holistic approach to culture was that taken by the Second Vatican Council (e.g. Ch.2 Gaudium et Spes in Abbott, W. ed. 1966:262ff). It is also that taken in this thesis. Thus religion is not viewed subjectively in a separate realm of culture.

Sociology, in its origins, was strongly opposed to traditional religion and philosophy, and indeed, sought to supplant them. Following the religious, philosophical and scientific revolutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and affected by the eighteenth century French pre-occupation with public order and the subordination of individuals to the social whole, Saint-Simon and Comte held that scientific principles applied to humanity as well as to nature. By his "scientific sociology" Comte planned to reform and control society using "social engineering" (Benton, T. 1977:20-30). Durkheim also upheld the primacy of society which he considered needed religious beliefs and ritual for cohesiveness and integration, but the subject celebrated was society itself, because ultimately "society is to its members what a god is for the faithful" (Pickering, W. ed. 1975:125 and Robertson, R. 1970:13-17). Durkheim argued that human thought originated in religion and progressed to science (Durkheim, E. 1976:9). Weber analyzed the functions of religion, particularly the relationship of religious ideas and socio-economic behaviour. For him, socio-economic distress was the source of the universal need of "salvation". He examined major religions as rationalizing agents and examples of bureaucratic organization and leadership (Robertson, R. 1970:14). For Marx, pre-socialist man, in his "alienation" leant on religion as a compensatory
crutch (Robertson, R. 1970:19-21). Hence "classic" sociologists sought to analyse religious phenomena, and, one way or another, to replace religion "scientifically".

In contrast to this tradition many modern sociologists take a holistic view of social systems wherein practices, beliefs, values and symbols compose the religious system. "What is really needed ... is an account of conditions by which religious beliefs and values are sustained by groups of individuals and the ways in which they are transmitted and modified" (Robertson, R. 1970:58-59). Even so, religion apparently receives less attention in sociological research.

Archbishop Penman, discussing religion and culture, noted that religion is a difficult area of study, not only because of its potential to arouse emotion, even in unbelievers, but also because of its complexities. He quotes the different aspects of religion as the ritual, mythological, doctrinal, ethical, social and experiential. In all religions these are shaped by certain historical contexts for "no religion ... can escape the fact that it is a human experience ... shaped by cultural forces" (Penman, D. 1987:55-56). Therefore, inevitably when the adherents move into a different culture they may encounter great difficulty because their symbols and practices were designed in another environment and may need adjusting/changing to suit the new.

2.2 Culture and Ethnicity
One is enculturated into the society wherein one is born and reared. Although culture is not static, in stable societies change comes only slowly. What happens when a person/group first contacts another culture? If either or both change some aspect of behaviour, acculturation occurs. If one succumbs to the ways of the other that person/group is assimilated. When both contacting cultures control the extent of cultural change so that each remains
The relevance and importance of cultural differences if unrecognized or neglected can have undesirable effects for religion. Mexican-American seminarians whether new arrivals or second/third generation "Americans", manifested "many of the cultural values of their parents and grandparents" and a spirituality different to modern, middle-class Americans. Many of these Hispanic students became acculturated to the American way of life in the seminary and so precluded themselves from serving their own people. Changes in structures and approaches are necessary to avoid this (Deck, A. 1987:32).

Today the concepts "ethnicity" and "ethnic groups" are related. The new term "ethnicity" meaning "the quality or character of an ethnic group" first appeared in 1953 (Glazer, N. & Moynihan, D. eds. 1975:1). Social scientists trace its emergence from the now discredited "race" theory which, by 1850, was a dominant scientific and political concept whereby it was generally accepted that biological types were permanent, determined a people's culture, were the origin of conflict and that races were hierarchically ranked (Banton, M. 1983:44-45 and Miles, R. 1982:13). This was debunked by Darwin's theory of natural selection which held that a species adapted to its environment: there were no permanent forms in nature; and by Mendel's discovery of genes and his showing that phenotypical features are not permanent definers of "race" (Miles, R. 1982:15). Though discredited by academics, "race" theories still influence political and public opinion in countries of mixed populations.

An important factor in the development of "ethnicity" has been the internationalization of industrial capitalism since World War II and the consequent large-scale labour migrations, planned or otherwise. Heterogeneous populations have become a feature of modern, industrialized societies, where most post-war immigrants were channeled into the unskilled,
low-paid, low-status jobs entailing hard work in unpleasant conditions (Piore, M. 1977:17). In such circumstances where people are removed from all familiar support systems, beset by cultural and socio-economic problems in a strange land, they tend to seek some commonality for support. The formation of "ethnic groups" can be one way of coping and providing a structure within which they can gain recognition, self respect and pursue their interests (Martin, J. 1981:23). Also "minority status frequently brings with it a consciousness of disadvantage and discrimination ... the situation of difference and separateness can be uncomfortable and is a recurrent spur to ethnic self-consciousness" (Encel, S. 1981:16).

Much has been written on the salience of ethnicity. Two contrasting approaches only are given, from marxist class analysis and from the Weberian approach.

Discussing the formation of ethnic minorities among immigrant workers in Britain and Germany, Castles, et al. (1984) argued that "becoming a minority is a process whereby dominant groups in a society ascribe certain (real or imagined) characteristics to newcomers and use these to justify the assignment of specific social and political roles. In response to this experience, migrants and their descendants develop their own cultures and institutions and perceive themselves as distinct groups within society" (Castles, S. et al. 1984:96).

De Lepervanche suggests "ethnicity" is something of a euphemism and argues that "the trend from race to ethnicity" is part of the ideological changes of the ruling class to retain/regain dominance. She considers that ethnic behaviour of non-Anglo-Saxon minorities is a conscious reaction to ruling class hegemony, be it by industrial unrest or by the assertion of cultural differences (de Lepervanche, M. 1980:35).

In contrast, Glazer and Moynihan (1975) noted that ethnicity motivated efficient organization to promote interest and gain advantage from welfare
governments (Glazer, N. & Moynihan, D. 1975:7 ff). Bell concluded that ethnicity is "best understood as a strategic choice by individuals who in other circumstances would choose other group membership as a means of gaining some power and privilege ... the attachment to ethnicity may flush or fade very quickly depending on political and economic circumstances" (Bell, D. in Glazer & Moynihan eds. 1975:171).

The growing literature and popular usage have not removed the complexities of the concept. Ethnicity/ethnic group would seem, when applied to migrants to be largely the consequence of a person's/group's "strategic choice" based on some common element of origin or culture, whether in response to or protest against their perceived/assigned class position, or as a means to gain political/economic advantage.

2.3 The Development of "Ethnicity" and "Multiculturalism" in Australia

Australia's postwar immigration programme was established to meet the needs of industrial development and defence. It was planned to recruit British and north-Europeans who would assimilate easily. This became more difficult when Europe's economic situation improved, so recruitment moved to eastern, southern Europe and the Middle East (Jupp, J. 1986:Ch.2). By the 1960s difficulties with assimilation became obvious, e.g. in the education of migrant children. Moreover, many people returned to Europe e.g. by 1966 almost 20 per cent British and Dutch returned (Martin, J. 1978:Ch.2). Government policy changed to integration and steps were taken to assist migrants e.g. grants to community agencies in the late 1960s. Since funds were allotted to "communities", it can be argued that this encouraged "community" development. Also from 1973 until discontinued by the Fraser government in 1976, the Australian Assistance Plan involved migrant personnel, as did Migrant Task Force Committees (Jupp 1986:Ch.2). These employed or evoked ethnic leadership and second generation bilingual persons who then had an
interest both in ethnicity and the status quo (e.g. Kakakios, M. & van den Velden, J. 1984).

From the late 1960s skilled Asians were allowed into Australia, and after the anti-discriminatory legislation of 1973, increasing numbers of Asians. Australia's population thus became very heterogeneous. In 1973 Grassby spoke of a "multicultural Australia" with "equal rights and opportunities for all, regardless of ethnic origin" (Jupp, J. 1986:33) seemingly a commitment to removing inequalities. With the advent of a Liberal government in 1975 the "multicultural" policy continued, but came to mean cultural diversity within a united nation. In 1977 the Australian Ethnic Affairs Council recommended three principles necessary for a successful "multicultural" society: social cohesion, cultural identity, equality of opportunity and access, to which in 1982 was added equal responsibility for, commitment to, and participation in society. All groups were to be served by core institutions e.g. those of the political, legal, economic systems. (Jupp, J. 1986 and Zubrzycki, J. 1982).

However, Jakubowicz argued that "multiculturalism" was a carefully planned and implemented ideology for the socio-economic and political advantage of the ruling class to legitimate "ethnic" labour practices and defuse possible ethnic opposition (Jakubowicz, A. 1984).

The confusion surrounding "multiculturalism" has been explained by Castles (1987) as resulting from the two approaches: i) as an "ideology of society" (the culturalist approach) multiculturalism upholds ethnic diversity within a cohesive society with core institutions and values; and ii) as a "principle of social policy" it examines structural factors that disadvantage migrants, and works for social justice issues. Since approaches are often mixed, the term is beset by complexities (Castles, S. 1987:3-5).

The whole question of "multiculturalism" has aroused much academic and public debate. In 1980 Smolicz upheld "multicultural" education whereby ethnic groups would maintain their distinctive culture in private life and accept
basic core values from the dominant Anglophone Australians. This seems like a modified assimilationist approach.

On the other hand, Bullivant argued against "multiculturalism" saying too many concepts were involved and confused. He pointed out that "a fully culturally pluralist society is one in which several ethnic groups with their individual cultural programmes and institutional systems attempt to coexist in the same nation-state" (Bullivant, B. 1980:19). This is clearly not intended in Australia. He advocated instead abandoning the "multicultural" ideology and working for "an integrated poly-ethnic society in both name and reality" (Bullivant, B. 1980:20).

A more acrimonious and public debate followed the publication, in March, 1984, of Professor Geoffrey Blainey's comments on Australian immigration policy, which he said, gave "powerful precedence" to Asians while many Australians resented this especially during times of high unemployment. (Sydney Morning Herald, 20.3.1984:3 and his prepared statement on p.9). Mr. West, then Minister for Immigration, with whose opinion that the "Asianisation" of Australia was inevitable the Professor had disagreed, responded that the latter's remarks "could justify a racist response". (Sydney Morning Herald, 21.3.1984:1). Various other responses ensued over following months.

In 1986 Budget cuts seemed to indicate a change in policy. It was suggested that since migrants have moved to another stage a choice will have to be made between "a new laisser-faire" approach or "a reassertion of a policy of social justice for minority groups" (Castles, S. 1987:8) for the Federal government seemed to be taking a new approach, "mainstreaming", to rationalize its attempts to balance the Budget. That is, it would withdraw from special funding and ethnic specific services and expect mainstream institutions to service the needs of their diverse populations from their own budgets and priorities.
The "immigration debate" erupted again in 1988 when Mr. John Howard, Leader of the Federal Opposition, renounced "multiculturalism" as divisive and advocated what he called a "One Australia" policy. The issue remains contentious.

2.4 Migration and Its Effects on Women

How has migration affected women? The socio-economic effects are well-documented. By considering their role in the society they left and in that to which they migrated, it can be argued that women of non-English-speaking background particularly, bear a heavier burden as a result.

Many immigrant women came from pre-industrial/peasant societies where the extended family was of primary importance and each member had responsibilities to, and was cared for by, the family (Huber, R. 1985:248). The social system revolved around face-to-face relationships and was regulated by a strict code of Honour and Shame (Huber, R. 1985:245-7). In male-dominated societies the husband controlled family affairs and discipline and provided for their needs, while maintaining his status in the local community. Since his honour was vested in his womenfolk, these were carefully supervised (Huber, R. 1985:248). The wife performed domestic duties, ministered to the husband and reared the children assisted by the extended family. She functioned as wife and mother in a secure, supportive system which protected but restricted her.

The isolated, nuclear-type family situation in which they found themselves as a result of migration to a modern, industrial society was a traumatic change for many women. Deprived of their previous extended kin support, they had to adjust rapidly to a new environment. However, this was not only a result of international migration but also a process within national boundaries as nations industrialize and develop, for example, Yugoslavia, Italy and Turkey. (Storer, D. ed., 1985).
Many migrant women, faced with economic hardship in a consumer society, join the workforce to become co-providers for their families. They "constitute 39 per cent of the total married female workforce even though they form only 25 per cent of all married women in Australia", and like their husbands are employed as process workers and in labouring and service industries (Storer, D. ed. 1985:10) because they lack English and qualifications or recognition of such (Dexter, J. 1987 and Bottomley, G. 1984:4). In factories they are found in the least-desirable work (Collins, J. 1984:12) and frequently suffer sexual harassment. Vulnerable, because they fear losing their jobs, they lack the language and social skills to cope with a situation from which their upbringing protected them. At home husbands relax but wives still have domestic tasks (Bottomley, F. 1984; Inglis, C. 1985:284 and Dexter, J. 1987:5-7). Many Asian men suffer depression and frustration over loss of status exacerbated by fears lest their working-wives betray them by promiscuity - alcoholism and violence result (Storer, D. ed. 1985:283-4). Generally husbands and wives carry old role expectations into the new environment and male dominance renders difficult the dialogue which might help the situation.

The nurturing mother role becomes stressful also. For example, traditional values such as protecting girls, cause friction when children encounter conflicting values at school and elsewhere (Storer, D. ed. 1985). Yet migrant parents desire on-going education for their children (Tsoidis, G. 1986:66-68).

Traditionally women are custodians and transmitters of family moral and cultural values. Although migration has caused considerable changes/modifications in female roles, basic values survive, especially if the family can participate in religious/cultural celebrations which help maintain ethnic identity, desired by most first generation migrants but less enthusiastically by their children (Storer, D. ed. 1985:28; Ata, A. 1988...
asserts that ethnic Churches surpass the family in upholding ethnic identity and culture).

Thus the unskilled woman migrant fulfills a double function and bears a double burden. She frequently endures marital discord and inter-generational conflict in the family and suffers stress and fatigue (Banchevska, R. 1974:186; Bottomley, G. 1984 and Dexter, J. 1987). Moreover, her difficulties are compounded if she does not speak English. Positively, she may gain greater independence and assurance through wider social contacts and achieve more equality at home. Freedom from kin ties may allow her to leave a bad marital situation and seek social security (Storer, D. ed. 1985:283-4).

Regardless of origin, for qualified women fluent in English, migration is far less traumatic. Many profit by the changed environment and enjoy more "democratic" family relationships (Storer, D. ed. 1985:204ff).

In conclusion, since religion is integral to culture, and women are central to the maintenance of culture, the process of migration affects in particular their role in this regard. Seeing that the formation of ethnic groups is a response to migration and the symbols and practices of the former homeland take on a new salience, the challenge to women as members of their ethnic groups is heightened - both in terms of the urgency of cultural maintenance and in the difficulty experienced when that culture is dislocated. The Case Study explored these issues in relation to their children's First Communion experience in Australia.
CHAPTER 3: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND MIGRATION

The Catholic Church in Australia belongs within the Catholic Church worldwide, and today, as a result of immigration, it reflects the cultural and ethnic diversity of the whole Church. For the Church worldwide and now for the Church in Australia the cultural plurality of its membership increases the difficulties not only of its mission and ministry, but also the maintenance of unity amid such diversity. These complexities ultimately touch every aspect of the Church's life, but this thesis selects its catholicity or universality as the most relevant to the issues being investigated since catholicity concerns the incarnation of the faith in "different external expressions and appearances in each part of the world" (Evangelli Nuntiandi, 1975 #62). A basic problem is to safeguard the truth (the transcendent aspects) of the message while presenting it in a manner understandable and relevant to its hearers, (e.g. Evangelii Nuntiandi #4 and #63) since "the split between the Gospel and culture is ... the drama of our time" (#20). These challenges confront the Church as a whole, the Church in Australia and at the practical level, the leadership and members of every culturally diverse parish congregation.

Another difficulty is that having long emphasized stability and uniformity, the Church then received an impetus to change and renewal through the Second Vatican Council, but some responses and reactions to conciliar changes contributed to considerable variations in understanding of how to be Catholic. Some examples are reviewed representing opinions frequently encountered which impinge on attitudes to religious practice and celebrations, and may effectively retard or thwart attempts at renewal. Moreover, these complexities and arguments impact on the national social situation and the decision-making process.

It is against this background, with the focus on catholicity, that the official response of the Church to modern migration phenomena is considered, as
well as that of the Church in Australia. Since other Christian Churches in Australia face similar diversity, their response is considered also.

3.1 The Catholic or Universal Church: Its Self-Image

Firstly we shall look briefly at how the Catholic Church sees itself today as evidenced by the Second Vatican Ecumenical (i.e. worldwide) Council (1962-65). The assembled bishops engaged in long and deep reflection and discussion on the nature of the Church. The outcome, was the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* which has been called "the most momentous achievement of the Council" (Abbott, W. ed. 1966:10). *Lumen Gentium* speaks of the "mystery" of the Church (i.e. something not fully comprehended by human thought and language), "in terms of the paradoxical union between the human and the divine. Because the Church is human, it exists in time and is subject to the forces of history. But because of its divine element it presses forward ... to a goal beyond history" (Abbott, W. ed. 1966:11). These two elements, the visible and the spiritual, form "one interlocked reality" which is analogous to the person of Christ in whom the divine and human natures form a unity (Abbott, W. ed. *Lumen Gentium* #8).

One image used for the Church is that of the People of God, having "citizens from every race" and fostering "insofar as they are good, the ability, resources and customs of each people". This Catholicity enriches the whole Church ... " moreover within the Church, particular Churches hold a rightful place. These Churches retain their own traditions without in any way lessening the Primacy of the Chair of Peter. This Chair presides over the whole assembly of charity and protects legitimate differences while at the same time it sees that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute to it" (Abbott, W. ed. *Lumen Gentium* #13). Thus the principle of unity in diversity was reasserted and the status of local Churches was revived. This particular aspect of the document is referred to especially as it is applicable to local Churches which
are composed of diverse groups, as in many parts of Australia, as well as to local Churches generally within the wider Church.

Having considered, albeit briefly, some aspects of the Church's official understanding of itself and its catholicity, we shall consider a few current variations of opinion on how to be "Catholic" found within the Church generally, but similar attitudes are found often at the parish level especially in congregations of diverse backgrounds.

In popular terminology the conservative stance would be "right wing", the pluralists represent a "central" position and the liberationists somewhere to the "left".

3.2 Some Variations in Catholic Thought Today

3.2.1 THE CONSERVATIVE STANCE

Two significant voices of the conservative stance are Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre and the organization, Opus Dei.

Archbishop Lefebvre, a Frenchman, has had considerable media coverage since the Council because of his public opposition to every Pope since Pius XII and to many changes instituted by the Council. Whereas the Papacy and the Council have scrutinized "the signs of the times", Lefebvre looks rather to the past, taking a narrow, static view of tradition while the Church speaks of a "living" tradition. Lefebvre has frequently denounced Council decisions, particularly on ecumenism and religious freedom, opposed liturgical changes and continued offering Mass according to the rite prescribed after the Council of Trent - a rite which was innovative itself back in 1587 (The Tablet, 9.7.88:781-2). Nevertheless he voices the anger of those who "feel cheated when mystery is converted into amusement" and "the sacred character of the Mass" is removed, and he resists the relativisation of truth (The Tablet 6.8.88:907). Paul VI, who had on-going problems with Lefebvre, realized that the root problem was not liturgy but "the nature of tradition and...
the living magisterium or teaching authority of the Church" (The Tablet, 3.9.88:1008-9). That is, his understanding of tradition was erroneous and his defiance of authority endangered unity.

Although suspended in 1976, Lefebvre established seminaries in five countries, ordained priests and had a following, in effect, he ran his own "Church". There were media reports of possible reconciliation in 1987, but following a reported breakdown in negotiations in May, 1988, the Archbishop illegally ordained priests and consecrated four bishops in June. The automatic penalty for an illegal episcopal consecration is excommunication for the Archbishop and those he consecrated. At the ceremony, Lefebvre asserted that he was in the right. (Sydney Morning Herald, 1.7.88:10). He is now in schism.

Lefebvre's view leaves no room for pluralism of religious practice or theological reflection, as has been the on-going Catholic tradition, despite setbacks, through the ages. By contrast, the official Church claims a commitment to the principle of unity in diversity which entails constant vigilance to maintain both without negating either. A challenge for the Church is how to deal with his followers - those who do not want to be in schism but maintain strong conservative preferences.

Such rejection of, or dissatisfaction with, post-conciliar changes is not uncommon. There is no simple solution because the reasons for it are complex (social, psychological, educational) and these are compounded further in areas of cultural and linguistic diversity because, when faced with change, people may react by returning to an earlier, more secure position thus putting at risk any attempts at renewal within the local Church.

Members of the organization, Opus Dei, represent a less extreme conservative stance.

Opus Dei was founded in Spain in 1928 by Monsignor Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer. Collins (1986) describes this Catholic organization as
"integralist" and "an expression of right wing fundamentalism" (p90). Opus Dei has been given a unique status, that of a Personal Prelature, by Pope John Paul II, so it is exempt from supervision of local bishops. It is much criticized and its secretiveness does little to enhance its reputation to outsiders. It claims 73,000 members over eighty-seven nations. Collins sees nothing new in its spirituality and asceticism by which members are to achieve holiness while living a secular life in the world. It tries to protect them from the contamination of "worldliness or unorthodoxy". Collins considers that it opposes renewal as intended by the Council. Although it does good, he sees a problem when such a movement "becomes an end in itself and the focus of the wider Church is blurred" for then there is the danger of it becoming a sect (Collins, P. 1986:103-110).

An American member of Opus Dei, Russel Shaw, shed light on that institution in his article on the "American Church" (The Tablet, 27.2.1988). He sees a polarization between "the American Church" that has been acculturated to the permissive society's values, and "the Catholic Church in America" which follows Pope John Paul II (wherein he locates Opus Dei) both coexist and contend for uncommitted Catholics. The causes of this situation - post Vatican II "ideological warfare" and its periodic outbreak of theological dissent, and the acculturation of American Catholics - are intertwined.

Shaw explained that Opus Dei is suspected/feared because its work, e.g. spiritual direction, is not readily visible.

Responses for and against the organization followed in succeeding weeks (The Tablet, March 1988).

This organization is attractive to persons who are concerned by changes implemented after Vatican II; they feel that the Church has taken a wrong turn somewhere. Others are anxious about raising children in a permissive society and seek stricter moral guidance.
The positions taken by Lefebvre and *Opus Dei* both challenge the Church's efforts to renew itself and update its methods, and particularly its reaffirmation of the principle of "unity in diversity" which accepts that there are various valid ways of expressing the faith. Some views on such plurality are now considered.

### 3.2.2 PLURALISM AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Considering the Church as a mystery of communion and diversity, Kerkhofs (1973) noted the difficulty of integrating "both unity and diversity, communion and plurality" (Kerkhofs, J. 1973:3). The basic principle which unites all and respects each is each person's being called to the Father through Christ. Groups tend to reduce differences, but the Church should encourage diversity and communion. Particularly, the Church "must defend the philosophical and theological pluralism which has always existed in the Church" (e.g. the various schools of the Middle Ages) (Kerkhofs, J. 1973:5). He perceives general trends in society, accelerating the process of pluralism. Communication must be encouraged but tension and conflict will arise, so structures are required to enable solutions to be found.

De Looz's paper (1973) clarified that a pluralist Church is not one where all opinions are equal or where all "settle for a lowest common denominator", but is one where each can make free moral choices based on certain basic values on which all agree. This would require that authority be exercised as a service ensuring conditions to cope with inevitable conflicts. All this would have to be considered and judged by the whole Church.

Marc (1980) sees pluralism as a challenge facing the Church. Throughout the world there is a diversity of local Churches and a variety of cultures and symbolic systems. An individual belongs first to a culture and on that base, faith is built. If the Church presents herself as an alien culture she risks being ignored. But the Church "is essentially a communion of differences" and her task is to encourage links between religion and culture, to build a
vibrant internal "ecumenism", which would help bring about greater ecumenism with other Christians.

Lovison (1987) looks at plurality from the viewpoint of ethnic groups within local Churches. He argues that from the beginning the Church was plural "both in practice and in theological reflection: the greater its unity the more visible was its capacity of being plural" (Lovison, T. 1987:6). The diversity of earlier centuries was proscribed in the west after the Reformation. Now the Vatican Council has reasserted that particular Churches "are formed to the image of the Universal Church ...". He argues that the original understanding of universality was more that of local "content" than of geographic extent - i.e. its receiving the cultural aspects of its peoples. He considers that the presence of migrant/ethnic groups in a Church is a stimulus to work for greater communion in diversity.

Writing on issues facing the Church in Australia, Leavey shows that recent changes have meant less common understandings and values among Catholics, therefore less cohesion. She argues that pluralism will be a feature of the future Church and that the crucial issue will be to maintain "internal unity of faith" in the midst of a plurality for which the Australian Church has not been prepared (Leavey, C. 1980:41-42).

3.2.3 LIBERATION THEOLOGY

Liberation theology was "a response to social oppression and the ecclesiastical narrowness" of the Latin-American Church (Hearne, B. 1984:358).

Gutierrez (1973) traces the changes in Latin America from the 1950s when it was expected that the developmentalist policies would lead to underdeveloped countries "catching up" with advanced nations. By the mid-1960s this was seen to be fallacious: Latin America was poorer and more dependent. Realizing that economic and political factors were involved in the
desperate plight of the people, Gutierrez argued that only a social reformation "will radically and qualitatively change the conditions in which they now live" (Gutierrez, G. 1973:88). He says that the official Church is often defensive and involved in the system. Some groups of Christians have opted for a political stance and joined with marxists against the "common adversary". Other groups form across denominational lines to work for unity and social justice. Following Vatican II and the Latin-American Bishops' Conference at Medellin (1968) "priests and religious today are the most dynamic and restless group in the Latin American Church" (Gutierrez, G. 1973:105).

Vatican II reasserted basic human rights and dignity and condemned injustice and oppression. The Medellin Conference was a turning point for the Latin American Church and was an inspiration for all Christians. It denounced structural injustice, institutionalized violence, and made an option for the poor (Dorr, D. 1983:158-161).

Liberation theology, has been disseminated via theological meetings throughout the 1970s and taken up by various groups e.g. Blacks, women (Hennelly, A. 1979:24-26).

Liberation theologians do not regard theirs as one method among many but as the method of doing theology. That is, they deny validity to any theological method not based on concrete human experience and history. Gutierrez explains that classical theology began with revelation and tradition from which were derived principles of action. Liberation theology begins with human experience, which is reflected upon in the light of the Gospel to produce understanding which may "grow" or "change" with the community's commitment (Gutierrez, G. 1973:11-15). Segundo approves of Gutierrez's assertion that liberation theology is "the only authentic and privileged standpoint for arriving at a full and complete understanding of God's revelation in Jesus Christ" (Segundo, J. 1975:241). For some, this claim has an unacceptable ultimateness.
Liberation theology is contentious on other grounds, mainly its methodology. Two different strands have been identified: a) that which employs marxist methods, is concerned about injustice, the needs of the poor and oppressed and seeks social transformation; and b) which is pastoral rather than political and seeks to incorporate the people as active agents in their own history, incorporating popular culture and religiosity (Scannone, J. 1975:221).

Paul VI in Octogesima Adveniens considered unacceptable the use of marxist social analysis because it offers a "false objectivity and unjustified certainty based on a selective and biased interpretation of facts" and warned that marxist method is related to its ideology, also that the marxist class struggle can lead to a totalitarian and violent society (Dorr, D. 1983:167).

Working for revolution by violent means has also drawn papal criticism. Paul VI in Populorum Progressio made a statement containing two elements: a) "that revolution is an unacceptable remedy for injustice because it gives rise to worse evils", and a parenthesis, b) "in which the Pope indicates that there might be certain rare exceptions to this guideline. The Medellin document quotes both parts ... but in reverse order, putting first the point that revolutionary insurrection can sometimes be legitimate ..." (Dorr, D. 1983:161) which of course gives added weight to the parenthesis despite the careful language of the statement. It seems the bishops committed themselves to peace, not violence, but clearly express the options facing the severe conditions of Latin America (Dorr, D. 1983:162). The question of violence is one of the strongest criticisms levelled against liberation theologians.

Segundo has an interesting rationale on violence. He argues that extending one's loves depletes one's energy to love, therefore there is a need to distance oneself from some so as to love others more effectively, i.e. one reduces some to a functional level by making them an object through internal/external violence. For him "violence is an internal dimension of all
concrete love" (Hennelly, A. 1979:132-3). Although he appeals to the Gospel to support this claim, it runs counter to the basic Christian command to love all others as Christ does. Segundo's argument could be used as a rationale to justify ultimate external violence.

Some positive aspects of liberation theology are its efforts to discern "the signs of the times" that are characterized by humankind's new relationship to creation brought about by science and technology, its commitment to working for the liberation of humankind from all oppression and exploitation, and its relating theology to real life. Some misgivings have been expressed about the use of marxist social analysis and the use of violence and revolution as means to establishing social justice. Areas which at least need further consideration are its somewhat romanticized view of the poor - who are as sinful as anyone else; moral evil, sin, goes beyond just social oppression; death - life's only certainty - is overlooked, and "a sense of the mysterious hiddenness of God sometimes seems to be lost in a politicized theology which is too sure of itself" (Hearne, B. 1984:367). Hearne notes also that violence is overcome only by forgiving love.

Collins (1986) discusses liberation theology among "problems of the eighties" in the Church. He emphasizes that it is a "product of the experience of base communities" which were formed from the 1960s in Latin America under the aegis of the Church, for protection against the violent oppression of military dictatorships. These "base communities" were small neighbourhood groups wherein a new educational method based on the ideas of Paulo Freire was employed (Collins, P. 1986:144-145). (So successful was this method that in 1975 Pope Paul VI noted that base communities were said "to flourish ... throughout the Church" and he distinguished between "ecclesial" base communities and those which were "radically opposed" to the Church, see Evangelii Nuntiandi #58.) A living Church emerged based on local communities that reflect on their experience in the light of the Gospel and
decide on action. Opposed to them are the military, the rich and powerful, US interests and multinationals and some Bishops especially the Secretary General of Bishop's Conference, Cardinal Trujillo. Trujillo has influence with Cardinal Ratzinger of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which issued an Instruction in 1984 accusing liberation theologians of using marxist concepts. Collins sees the root problem as "fear of the development of a base level Church which Rome does not directly control ... the question is not one of orthodoxy but one of power" (Collins, P. 1986:148).

As noted above, liberation theology is a response to the appalling human conditions in Latin America. Despite its claim to be the only theological method, some deny its universal application, for example:

Hearne (1984) observes that liberation theology's economic analysis of society neglects/ignores cultural factors e.g. art, but in Africa culture is vitally important - "the right to be oneself". In the longterm culture is as important to human development as is economics, for the "transcendence of the human spirit ... struggles for the 'beyond' ... even in the most perfect social system" (Hearne, B. 1984:368).

Considering past and future missionary effort in Asia, Pieris (1982) a Sri Lankan Jesuit and Buddhist scholar, criticizes liberationists and other western church people. He argues that for the Churches in Asia to become Churches of Asia requires the evangelization of the Asian poor, in collaboration with the pre-Christian monasteries. But the association of poverty and religion introduces politics because capitalism and marxism also claim to bring liberation to the poor. Religion and ideologies preach liberation in Asia - in Asia the poor will decide which is competent to mediate liberation.

He contends that an authentic Asian Church could only be poor, fitting into the local scene through the traditional "religious socialism" as practised by the rural class and in a more developed fashion in Buddhist monasteries. In "religious socialism", "the means of production are owned by the whole
community and the fruits of labour are distributed among the members equitably" (Pieris, A. 1982:434). The clans seek harmony in communion with nature, the monks seek a "Salvific Beyond" through gnosis and asceticism. Thus on the Asian model, a basic Christian community would be based on voluntary poverty, shared life and religious conviction. From such communities would come an indigenous theology when local persons were capable of such articulation of their experience. Some such communities already exist in Sri Lanka.

Asian political leaders saw the potential of the Asian model - Gandhi, Mao Tse-tung and especially Ho Chi Minh. Pieris says that for the Church too "the adoption of rural socialism (is) both a religious imperative and a political action" (Pieris, A. 1982:435).

In conclusion Pieris considers that liberation theology as such holds no hope for Asia unless it changes to fit the local tradition and values which are ancient and deep-rooted.

Clearly the stance of "liberationists" goes beyond the official understanding of unity in diversity. Both extremes, either to left or right, threaten or deny one or other aspect of the official position. The complexities and argument at the international level impact at the local level. Not only is there an issue of dealing with and responding to ethnic diversity, but also the diversity of opinion within the Catholic Church in relation to questions of legitimate authority and the degree of social intervention, particularly at the political level. As immigrants have come from all over the world, these complexities and arguments impact on the national social situation and the decision-making process.

From this background, the review continues with a brief consideration of the Church's response to migration phenomena, especially from the aspects of catholicity and cultural diversity.
3.3 The Church's Response to Migration: Rome's Directives

The Church's response to the migration phenomenon stretches back to apostolic times and although the principles of caring for "the stranger" remain, the approach has varied according to the changing times. Lovison (1987) traces the Church's official directives regarding foreigners/travellers from the Didache of the Apostolic era which stated: "whoever comes in the name of the Lord should be welcomed by you ..." through similar assertions by the fourth century Fathers of the Church, to the Lateran Council IV of 1215 which issued the first pastoral document regarding foreign groups living in cities and dioceses. It "severely" ordered that suitable men be provided to minister to these groups "according to the diverse rites and languages ...". This text showed respect for diversity and that Churches receiving immigrants were responsible for their care (Lovison, T. 1987:4-5).

Rome's concept of national parishes for the pastoral care of migrants seems to have emerged with Leo XIII in 1888 (Cheli, G. 1987:1).

The pastoral problems of postwar refugees and migrants were addressed in 1952 by Pius XII's Apostolic Constitution, Exul Familia, which set out norms; principally that the Congregation of Bishops would approve "missionaries to migrants" who were to operate through "personal parishes" or "missions for the care of souls". This approach was influenced largely by the Italian experience in Western Europe and paid scant attention to the efforts of national and local Churches in different circumstances, e.g. it envisaged a temporary situation whereas in Australia and America migration was largely permanent (Hally, C. 1980a and O'Leary, H. 1971). Its approach was that of the time, "centralist, clerical, juridical" (Hally, C. 1980a:19).

This approach changed after Vatican Council II. We note some texts relevant to the issues of local Churches and migration.

The Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes, was addressed to the whole of humanity (which was a
change from documents to bishops). It focused on the dignity and fundamental rights of humankind against the background of the "profound and rapid" changes taking place in the modern world. It deplored the fact that often women are denied the same rights and freedoms as men (Gaudium et Spes #29). It defined the Church's role in society as a religious one. She is not bound to any particular culture, or political, economic or social system, but "looks with great respect upon all the true, good and just elements found in the very wide variety of institutions which the human race has established for itself and continues to establish" (Gaudium et Spes, #42).

Ad Gentes, the Decree on Missionary Activity, asserts that "Christ and the Church ... transcend every particularity of race and nation and therefore cannot be considered foreign anywhere or to anybody" (Ad Gentes #8). Where new Christian communities are formed they should follow "the honourable customs of their own nation as good citizens" (Ad Gentes #15) and "every day become increasingly aware and alive as communities of faith, liturgy and love" (Ad Gentes #19).

The Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to the non-Christian Religions, Nostra Aetate, considered the great world religions Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim, and accepted whatever is "true and holy" in them (#2 and #3). Acknowledging that Christians are children of Abraham according to faith, the Council fostered mutual understanding and respect towards the Jews and deplored all persecution and anti-semitism. Further, the Council rejected any form of discrimination against human beings (#5).

The Decree of Bishops, Christus Dominus, said the Bishop is to have special concern for the various immigrant groups in his diocese by suitable pastoral "methods and institutions" (Christus Dominus #18). This article has been greatly developed in subsequent Roman directives. The bishop is to provide for the spiritual care of those of different rite "through priests or
parishes of that rite" and also for those of different language groups (Christus Dominus #23).

Following the Council, in 1969, Paul VI's Apostolic Letter, Pastoralis Migratorum showed the influence of the Council's thinking on collegiality and subsidiarity as it elaborated on the directives in Christus Dominus #18, referred to above. Pastoralis Migratorum recognized the responsibility of local bishops for pastoral planning concerning migrants and chaplains. The main burden of pastoral care fell to the local parish priest where migrants lived, and priests were to share the burden with chaplains if they were available. In addition, all the faithful were called to participate according to their role and their activity should extend to all that concerned human rights and the welfare of migrants (O'Leary, H. 1971 and Hally, C. 1980a:20).

In 1975, ten years after the Council, Paul VI addressed the Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii Nuntiandi to the Bishops, clergy and laity of the world. He called on the whole Church to revise its methods and present "the heritage of faith" in a manner understandable to modern society. "Evangelizing means bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity and through its influence transforming humanity from within ..." (Evangelii Nuntiandi #18). "What matters is to evangelize man's culture and cultures... in a vital way, in depth and right to their very roots" (Evangelii Nuntiandi #20). It was a call to the inculturation of the Gospel. He noted that the Universal Church "takes on different external expressions and appearances in each part of the world" (#62), and each local Church is to inculturate the Gospel using its own language, signs and symbols (#63).

Paul VI had established the Pontifical Commission for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant Peoples in 1970. In 1978 it sent out a Letter to Episcopal Conferences on the Church and People on the Move, which elaborated further on Christus Dominus #18. It reflected on the profound and rapid changes in the modern world, how they affect humankind, and the
Church's ministry to people on the move. It reasserted the rights, dignity and duties of the human person and communities. The faithful were urged to change their mentality and develop concepts which were "trans-territorial". Parishes were called to become "still more of a community", to put themselves "at the service of the world" and to allow "real communities ... to blossom amid groups of people on the move". Every one of the faithful was called to the common task and was warned against any nationalistic or discriminatory attitudes. Seminarians should be adequately trained to minister to people on the move. The chaplain's role and status were to be on a par with diocesan clergy (Rome 1978). The document concluded with a recommendation for interdisciplinary study centres where professionals and pastoral personnel could confer. Hally sees this as very relevant to the migrant/ethnic situation in Australia and notes that the Galbally Report had made a similar recommendation regarding research and study centres. (Hally, C. 1980a:22) as had also the Centre for Urban research and Action Report to the Australian Council of Churches, 1978, (Hally, C. 1980a:34).

Being the latest directive, *People on the Move* is currently applicable.

Thus facts of migration have impacted on the Church which clearly wants to be responsive to its changed congregations. The main guidelines for doing so have been delineated by Rome, but implementation at the local level requires first that the situation be recognized, then that relevant information be collected and assessed realistically so that practical steps can be taken to meet the needs of culturally diverse congregations in an on-going way, (for an example of how this was done in a large diocese following *People on the Move*, see Bevilacqua, A. 1979).

The response of the Church in Australia to the immigration influx is now reviewed.
3.4 The Catholic Church in Australia and Postwar Immigration

3.4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC INCREASE AND ETHNIC DIVERSIFICATION

Postwar immigration in Australia changed the composition of the Catholic Church from one of predominantly Irish background to a poly-ethnic one in a short space of time. As Hally (1980a) points out: "Between 1911 and 1947 (36 years) the Australian population increased by 170% at an annual rate of 1.9%. During the same period the Australian Catholic population increased by only 58% at an annual rate of 1.47%. However, between 1947 and 1971 (24 years) the total population increased by 68% (2.8% per annum) whereas the Catholic population increased by 119% at the extraordinary annual rate of 4.9% ... " (Hally, C. 1980a:1). Many of these people were from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The Catholic population increased and simultaneously became ethnically and culturally diverse. Census figures show, in fact, that the effect of immigration on the Catholic Church brought greater diversity than in that of the general population. In 1954 the percentage born overseas in the Australian population was 14.3 per cent but the percentage born overseas in the Catholic population was 17.8 per cent and it remained higher each census until 1981 (the last figure available) when the figure for the general population was 20.6 per cent and for the Catholic population, 23.9 per cent (Pittarello, A. 1987:6). The Irish-born in the Catholic population were 0.9 per cent in 1981 showing that their earlier majority status has been overtaken by recent immigrant groups (Pittarello, A. 1987:10). Pittarello argued that today, "migrants and their children are the Catholic Church in Australia" (see also Multicultural Committee 1984:184).

The significance of this extraordinary, rapid diversification becomes clearer when set in its historical context. The Australian Catholic Church had only just emerged from its pioneering stage in the late 1930s, with its first Australian-born bishops and a well-set-up parish and school system, when its newly-developed and somewhat fragile "Australian" identity was confronted by
a great number of ethnically diverse newcomers. (Hally, C. 1980a:3). It is not surprising that the initial approach to "migrants" was the government's policy of assimilating the new arrivals with as little change as possible.

3.4.2 THE CHURCH'S OFFICIAL RESPONSE: MIGRANT CHAPLAINS

Pastoral concern regarding the presence of numerous immigrants in the Church evoked from the Australian hierarchy their first pastoral activity planned on a national basis. They set up the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee (FCIC) in 1947 to provide for the spiritual care of immigrants and to liaise with government bodies for their needs (O'Leary, H. 1971:134 and Hally, C. 1980a:22).

From its inception the FCIC arranged for chaplains to come to Australia to minister to the different language groups. The policy was that migrant chaplains would serve their own people within existing parish structures. They would not be given personal parishes or missions for the care of souls. The basic idea was to provide spiritual care for adults in their own languages, but that the children would be assimilated through the parish and school systems. This followed the general "assimilation" approach of the time (Hally, C. 1980a:24-29).

This Australian system was already well established, with about fifty chaplains working in parishes, when Rome issued *Exul Familia* in 1952. The bishops judged that their decision suited local needs best at the time and were cautious, perhaps, lest they incur the difficulties experienced by the American Church which had established national parishes earlier and had found them of only limited value (O'Leary, H. 1971:142). Based on the conditions in Western Europe much of the legislation of *Exul Familia* was unworkable elsewhere. The Australian bishops quietly evaded or ignored it (O'Leary, H. 1971:129 and Kaluski, M. 1988:103). Nevertheless they did have the chaplains authorized by Rome and the Secretary of the Consistorial Congregation in Rome approved
their approach in a letter to the Apostolic Delegate in 1954 (Murphy, J. 1987:3).

In 1969, following Vatican II, and influenced by its emphasis on collegiality and subsidiarity, came the Apostolic Letter of Paul VI, *Pastoralis Migratorum* which was very pastoral in approach and encouraging of local initiatives. This document empowered national episcopal conferences to organize the pastoral care of migrant peoples by "suitable methods and institutions" and added that the immediate burden of pastoral care fell on parish priests and migrant chaplains. Thus the policy of the Australian hierarchy dating from 1947 was fully approved (O'Leary, H. 1971:130).

Most chaplains have belonged to religious orders. At times where numbers warranted it, they have served *de facto* national parishes. Some have altered their pastoral activity to meet new needs, e.g. the Scalabrinians now also conduct a research centre in both Sydney and Melbourne.

The status and role of migrant chaplains have not yet been reassessed although suggested by O'Leary in 1971, especially as "more sophisticated, controllable and above all rescindable ways of granting a chaplain a pastor's faculties regarding his own people have now emerged" (O'Leary, H. 1971:143).

Not only is there diversity of language and culture in the Church but also of rites. "Rites" involve ancient liturgies, traditions and spiritualities expressing the Catholic faith. The Latin rite is dominant in the western Church but several rites exist in the eastern Church (e.g. the Maronite rite to which belonged the Lebanese women interviewed in the Case Study.) Each rite is unique and of equal rights and dignity in the Church but the problems that the eastern rite chaplains encounter in Australia seem to stem from the local Latin Church's ignorance of, and lack of interest in, other rites plus a lack of communication and consideration in pastoral matters (Takchi, J. 1987). Hally noted that the presence of eastern rites is a new experience for most Australian Catholics.
Education in these matters for all levels of the Church and improved communication among the various rites seem to be necessary.

As well as the eastern rite chaplains there were in 1987 one hundred and sixty-seven Latin rite chaplains. In view of present needs and practices a complete reassessment of their role and status was called for at the National Convention on Pastoral Care (Murphy, J. 1987 and Convention recommendations).

On the subject of migrant chaplains, Jean Martin wrote that "the intermittent nature of the contacts between ethnic Catholics and their priests was one factor which national chaplains felt had contributed to the decline in the respect for the Church and priestly authority among migrants in Australia ..." (Martin, J. 1972:95). The situation of migrant chaplains vis-à-vis the Church as a whole gains in urgency when one reviews the demographic changes in conjunction with personnel available for pastoral ministry.

3.4.3 PASTORAL CARE PERSONNEL

Traditional Catholic pastoral care has gradually diminished since the late 1960s following a sudden downturn in priestly and religious vocations. Although "the Catholic and Australian population is becoming more ethnically and culturally diversified, religious and clerical personnel are becoming less so". The majority of clerics and religious are Australian-born and occupy the decision-making positions in the Church, "the relative lack of ethnic and cultural diversity among them is likely to add to an inflexibility of the response in pastoral care institutions to the changed ethnic composition of the Catholic population" (Hally, C. 1980a:13).

Smolicz relates this dearth of ethnic representation in the Church to its slowness in making structural adaptations to accommodate the ethnic diversity of religious expression appropriate in an ethnically-diverse society. He contends that the Church's attitude to its non-English-speaking faithful over the
longterm will be reflected in its two "pivotal" institutions, parish and Catholic school. Smolicz argues that if the clergy are to be close to the people, both local and migrant priests, it would involve the latter being part of the "mainstream", and the legitimizing of their languages and cultures. To date the Church has treated minority languages and liturgical traditions as a transitory feature. Yet, "if multiculturalism is to be of lasting value to the Church, provisions need to be made for the spiritual care of minority ethnic groups on a more permanent basis that allows for the preservation and development of certain crucial aspects of their cultures ... and the modification of others ... hence for their integration on a pluralist basis into the mainstream of the Australian Church" (Smolicz 1987:39). He continues that this would help ethnic youth who are in a dilemma: whether to opt for the Australian tradition or their parental tradition. Most become marginalized, and such do not enter seminaries - which Church would they minister to anyway? He refers to his recent study of seminarians of Polish origin which showed that the seminaries educated the young men "if not deliberately, then effectively, to be unfit for any ministry to people of their own background upon ordination". Those who did preserve any cultural aspects lost them later in the "mainstream". "Lack of priests who are both Australian-born and knowledgeable about their own cultural and linguistic background makes it difficult for the Australian hierarchy to assume a more multicultural complexion .... When minority cultures are marginalized in the hope of their eventual demise, not only is the spiritual welfare of the minorities jeopardized, but the dominant Catholic group is deprived of channels whereby other cultural traditions can become part of their experience and enrich the Church as a whole. Such an extended and revitalized Church would be more acceptable to the ethnic minorities as well as more intellectually and culturally viable .... " (Smolicz, J. 1987:41).

Pittarello also argued strongly for the dominant "Anglo-Celtic" section of the Catholic Church in Australia to realize that Irish traditions did not suit the
majority in today's Church, that a new self-image and appropriate structural changes were necessary to meet the religious needs of the present-day multi-ethnic Church (Pittarello, A. 1987). Hally had reached a similar conclusion from a different approach. Reviewing its patterns of growth and changes Hally concluded that "the times call for the development of a new identity and modus vivendi by the Catholic Church as an institution, in continuity with the past and open to the future" (Hally, C. 1983:87).

Cheli (1987) emphasized also that the Catholic Church is an immigrant Church, standing in need of "a new vision and a new pastoral approach" (Cheli, G. 1987:6).

### 3.4.4 A CULTURALLY-DIVERSE CHURCH IN A MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETY

As we have seen, the Catholic Church has become more multi-ethnic than the country as a whole and within it there are not only cultural differences which affect the way people experience their faith but also a number of eastern rites which for most Latin rite Catholics are something of a mystery. As well, in Australia today there is also great diversity of religious belief and practice in the general community.

Cox claims that eighty different religions have established places of worship (Cox, D. 1986:116). As Painter comments "irrespective of the claims of Christianity, the plurality of religious faiths will be a permanent feature of our world as a whole" (Painter, J. 1986:148). Hence increasing numbers of the world's major religious, e.g. Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, are a feature of the Australian scene.

Another significant development is the increasing number of persons who do not identify with any religion e.g. in 1976 census they equalled 20.1 per cent, third largest category after Anglicans and Catholics (Hally, C. 1980a:5). In 1981 it was 21.7 per cent (Collins, P. 1986:211). But a major finding of the Australian Values Study (1983) was "Australia is more religious
than people think" e.g. two-thirds of Australians pray/meditate/contemplate at least occasionally as do nearly half those who have no religion (in Bouma, G. & Dixon, B. 1986:V). Commenting on the implications of such findings for the Churches, Carr suggests that Churches needed to change their approach and methods and develop the necessary communication skills to make the Gospel relevant to today's people (in Bouma, G. & Dixon, B. 1986:IX). Similar principles would apply to the cross-cultural situation within the Churches.

3.4.5 EFFECTS ON THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

This ethnic and religious diversity has become very obvious in the Catholic school system. Dissatisfied with the values and discipline in the government system many Orthodox, Islamic and Buddhist parents want their children educated "in the Catholic schools but not necessarily to receive a Catholic education" in places where they are accepted because of the need for viable numbers. In light of government funding this raises questions whether the reply is "yes" or "no" to the question of accepting non-Catholic children. These delicate issues need to be addressed at the national level (Cahill, D. 1987:8). Earlier Hally had commented on the question of religious freedom for students of other faiths (Hally, C. 1980a:5).

Designed originally for Latin rite children the Catholic schools have been slow to recognize the changed situation. Cahill says that the needs of eastern rite children are largely unrecognized. "Most leaders in Catholic schools are barely aware of their existence, let alone have any in-depth knowledge" (Cahill, D. 1987:7). The National Convention recommended the inclusion of Eastern rite studies in training courses and in-service programmes for teachers.

Language is another aspect of social diversity which has repercussions in education and pastoral ministry. For example a 1978 survey found that in NSW Catholic schools, students were from 140 different ethnic backgrounds,
forty different religions and ninety languages and dialects ... "no institution of the complexity of an educational system can react quickly with adequate flexibility to such a sudden and comprehensive diversification of its student body" (Hally, C. 1980a:7. See also Cahill, D. 1987:8 on diversity in Catholic schools).

The Catholic schools did the best they could to teach English to migrant children before government funds were available after 1970 for the Child Migrant Education Programme, and the "Multicultural Education Programme" after 1976 following the recommendations of the Commonwealth Education Department's "Inquiry Into Schools of High Migrant Density" in 1975 (National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education, 1987:11) Catholic Education offices were set up to administer these funds that have been a deciding financial factor when innovations were considered (Hally, C. 1980a:25-26). Enthusiasm for "multicultural education" has since waned somewhat. Cahill refers to the recent "multicultural" debate and concludes that "Castles (1987) suggests that the consensus on "multiculturalism" can no longer be taken for granted ..." and so the Catholic community will have to take its own decision on the issue (Cahill, D. 1987:5). He knows of "no substantial policy statement at a national level on the notion of education for a multicultural society as it applies to the Catholic schooling sector, and supported by a theology of ethnicity and multiculturalism" (Cahill, D. 1987:5). Despite this lack, good things have been happening, among them "a specialist course in multicultural education at Melbourne's Institute of Catholic Education .... " and the Social Literacy Project sponsored by the Sydney CEO which Cahill sees as "one of the most worthwhile curriculum developments in the last decade in Australia" (Cahill, D. 1987:4).
3.4.6 RESEARCH AND CRITIQUES OF THE RESPONSE OF THE CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

Writing in 1972 Jean Martin commented that: "Catholic scholars appear to have made no serious examination of exactly how and to what extent immigrant Catholics are being integrated into the Catholic Church nor tested the popular assumption that a common faith automatically unites locals and newcomers" (Martin, J. 1972:86).

The first major study of the Catholic Church and migrants was Lewins' The Myth of the Catholic Church, 1978 wherein he argued that the Church is more "Australian" than "Catholic" and that "a common faith ... is of little consequence, culture divides more than religion unites" (Lewins, F. 1978:6). He examined three entities: Rome, the Australian hierarchy, the parish, and maintained that each was intent on maintaining its own authority and interests. Their stated positions vary from their practice because they do not have the same goals (Lewins, F. 1978:128-9). He claimed that Australian bishops pursued their own policy which reflected local attitudes and migrants' interests were not a priority. Migrants' experience of the Catholic Church was characterized by "neglect and antagonism" - despite a variety of pastoral care (Lewins, F. 1978:92).

Hally (1980a) responded that Lewins' model failed to account adequately for the structural complexities involved e.g. particularly the relationship between Rome and the Episcopal Conferences. Nor did Lewins show understanding of the role of the parish/school "in preserving a minority heritage over several generations of migration into a hostile environment ...". It was expected to do the same for postwar migrants. Finally, he says that the ad hoc decisions and defensiveness Lewins criticized followed the Church's lack of "adequate machinery for policy making and implementation regarding migrant and ethnic affairs" (Hally, C.1980a:30-1). In a later paper on inculturation Hally referred to the Lewins thesis saying that Lewins' assertion that a common faith was of little consequence was not necessarily right.
because "what divides is not necessarily the common faith but more often the symbolic expressions thereof, drawn from diverse cultures" (Hally, C. 1986:31).

The cultural expression of religious faith was addressed by Pittarello in his study of Italian Catholic immigrants reported in his thesis: *Soup Without Salt* 1980, a work of which Campion stated: "no book of the decade has influenced me more" (Campion, E. 1987:8).

Pittarello argued that the cause of the diversity of religious practice of ethnic groups must be found within the social environment from which they came, so he sought "the characteristic of the socio-religious environments of Italy and Australia as the origin of the differing religious orientation of the respective peoples" (Pittarello, A. 1980:3).

From his research he was able to contrast the religious attitudes as: "Australians need to pray privately; Italians need to pray publicly. Australians keep their religion within the church and within themselves; Italians want to take their religion outside the church into the midst of society ..." (Pittarello, A. 1980:88) i.e. "for Italians religion is primarily a social experience and for Australians it is primarily an individualistic experience". He prefers to speak of religious "diversity" rather than "division". Hence his conclusion: "Religion unites, culture diversifies" (Pittarello, A. 1980:92).

As Campion noted, Pittarello understood what Lewins appears to have missed, that the problem was one of a "religious culture versus a religious culture", which suggests that there are valid other ways of being Catholic - the Church in Australia has become pluralist, (Campion, E. 1987:8-9).

But many Australian Catholics seem slow to understand that there can be quite valid, different ways of expressing the religion. This was pointed out by O'Leary who applied to Australians the call of *Pastoralis Migratorum* to all the faithful to participate in pastoral care for migrants. This covered three main areas:
a) attitudes to non-Catholics and non-Christians: Laypeople especially who have more opportunities than the clergy, are urged to consider the spiritual needs of non-Catholics and non-Christians, especially foreign students;

b) attitudes to social justice issues: Catholics should look beyond merely spiritual care and work for "whatever in any way concerns the welfare of migrants" as befits their human dignity;

c) a one-sided attitude to migration: Australians should consider justice to other countries, e.g. when seeking skilled labour, and should work "to change community attitudes and government policies concerning migrants". An important aspect is that Catholics should resist the "endemic temptation to under-rate the value of foreign cultures and of spiritual traditions different to our own" (O'Leary, H. 1971:148-150). He pointed out that Rome, with "honesty and humility" had reappraised its mentality and urged Australian Catholics to do the same.

Archbishop Cheli from the Pontifical Commission made a similar observation in his address to the National Convention on Pastoral Care: "Australian Christians have yet to face seriously the responsibilities of living in a multicultural society". The Church reflects the general attitude of "a cultural rigidity and an unconscious air of superiority (in relation to other cultures) that makes a compassionate and caring ministry all the more unlikely. This can be overcome by a consistent, longterm education programme ..." (Cheli, G. 1987:6).

Speaking of the changed mentality needed to respond pastorally to people on the move, the Pontifical Commission observed that it required "no small effort to overcome habits rooted in the static" (Rome 1978:10). Herein lies the difficulty - can it be done?
Hally considered this in a paper investigating "the Catholic Church's theological understanding of its relationship to culture", especially "the interaction between culturally diverse groups within ... the Australian local Church" (Hally, C. 1980b:2-3). Looking at the history of the Church, he saw the decision of the 1870s to establish a separate school system as one that united the Catholic minority in a common task that lasted till the 1960s. He considers that the actual challenge facing "contemporary Australian society dominated by the tyranny of the majority, will be how it treats its minorities" and queries whether cultural contributions will be accepted and incorporated into Australian society. Also, will the Church modify its structures to promote communication, sharing, co-operation between ethnic Catholic groups (Hally, C. 1980b:8)?

He is not alone in seeing the Church as facing a time of decision. Arbuckle, a social anthropologist, assessed the response of the Australian and NZ Catholic Churches ten years afterwards, to Evangelii Nuntiandi (1975) which had called on all the faithful to bring the Gospel to "every strata of humanity" in a radical way (Evangelii Nuntiandi 1975 #19-20). The Pope called for inculturation i.e. "an ongoing process of reciprocal and critical interaction and assimilation" between the Gospel and culture, which takes place in "alive communities of faith, liturgy and love" (Arbuckle, G. 1985:336). Arbuckle thinks that for the most part the Churches have succumbed to acculturation, i.e. taking on the values of the general society, and concludes that they face a time of decision. He sees new kinds of structures and relationships being necessary to ensure participation by all according to their role in the Church which to date is "still heavily clerically and male-oriented in attitude and structure". The faith communities require "professional, faith-inspired leadership" which would challenge them and provide the necessary resources required for pastoral dialogue and decisions. Arbuckle suggests that the two Churches establish a pastoral "research centre based on thorough
professional foundations" ... to be ... "interdisciplinary in its nature involving theologians and social scientists. It should not be large but of sufficient size to guarantee flexibility, creativity and professionalism" (Arbuckle, G. 1985:347).

In concluding he sees the task facing the Church as daunting, but not impossible.

The only research done so far on women and the effect of migration on their faith practice was that prepared by Patricia Ravalico for the National Convention on Pastoral Care (1987). Her research entailed group interviews with, and a personal questionnaire for, 119 women from five countries: Latin America, Lebanon, Vietnam, Philippines, Malta.

Her research showed that for religious involvement, Mass was the highest priority for 90 per cent of the women, except for those from Latin America, only 50 per cent. Those who attended Mass in their own language on arrival in Australia were more likely to keep up the practice of Mass attendance.

Concerning religious adaptation, Ravalico found that the women generally perceived more similarities than differences between the Australian Catholic Church and that in their home country. More specific questions elicited the differences (71 per cent) and these were strongly felt.

Seventy-seven per cent of the women felt supported by their local Church. Those with children at the Catholic school or who attended their own language Mass (76 per cent) felt more supported. Most women did not consider Australian priests as especially understanding of them (only 46 per cent did). Ceremonies conducted by their own priests were more satisfying to 81 per cent.

Most saw the religious education of their children as the parents' responsibility, especially the mothers. Expectations varied among groups but generally Australia was not considered as good a place to rear children religiously. Ravalico correlates this with the women's opinion that religious
practice differed in Australia from that in their original homeland (Ravalico, P. 1987:47).

When seeking pastoral care most women would approach non-church organizations for socio-economic needs, but the majority would appeal to migrant chaplains for marital and child-parent problems.

Ravalico's main finding was that Catholic immigrant women "can and do identify with the Catholic Church in Australia" and perceive similarities before differences. Pittarello had noted the same thing in his research with Italians (Pittarello, A. 1980:92). Since the Church to date has similar structures, organizations, worship, such is not surprising. Ravalico found that important differences were "external manifestations of religiousness". Pittarello had noted his respondents missed the celebration of feastdays, which in Italy had "a more social than a religious content" (Pittarello, A. 1980:92). Ravalico linked the strongly felt differences with the women's opinion that Australia was a less good place in which to rear children.

Her other findings concerned differences across ethnic lines and the diversity of responses from Latin Americans, but these were only noted. Seeing that religious ceremonies in their own languages were important to the women, Ravalico asserted that the clergy should become bilingual as far as possible and some should have overseas experience.

In conclusion, in a short time Australia's postwar immigration programme produced an unplanned great heterogeneity in the general population, but an even greater ethnic diversity in the Catholic Church. Today migrants and their children make up more than half of the Catholic population, so for the majority, the traditions coming from the Church's Irish background are inappropriate. Several writers point to a need for a new self-image and a new approach, and that structural changes are necessary to make the Church more relevant to its diverse peoples. Several papers called for a professionally-based pastoral research centre to plan and implement pastoral
programmes in association with pastoral personnel. Such a centre could assist with the suggested educational programmes needed for every level in the Church to become informed and educated to the changes that are necessary to meet present-day needs.

3.5 The Response from other Australian Christian Churches to Ethnic Diversity

The other Churches, also, have addressed the issue of ethnic diversity. Considering the Churches, particularly the Protestant ones, and their uncertainty as they faced the 1980s, Faulkner (1980) argued that their denominational and charitable efforts over the first twenty years of postwar immigration had left them unprepared for the developments of the 1970s when ethnic groups became more organized and politically active. The Churches divided into persons who continued with the assimilationist approach and those who worked for justice issues in an ethnically-diverse society, inspired by the World Council of Churches. Again, the Churches were unprepared for the problems and theological challenges of the 1980s. Particular concerns were social justice issues for migrants and refugees and a resurgence of racism, and also that the Churches' theology and activities had not equipped them for the increasingly political aspects of migration and refugee work.

Regarding refugee work, the authorities in the Australian Council of Churches realized that the Resettlement Department "was not equipped to respond to the new refugee situation" of the late 1970s and was out of touch with all relevant bodies. Despite various efforts, change came only in 1984-6 when the Department became the Refugee and Migrant Service and changed its priorities to work for "more durable solutions" than resettlement (Matheson, A. 1987).

Most religions in Australia have already become "multicultural" in the sense of the cultural composition of their membership. How best respond to this? Penman suggested that the religions look at: "a) the multicultural dimension within their own community; b) the multi-faith dimension of
Australian society; and c) their recognition in the broader Australian Society" (Penman, D. 1987:58).

On the multi-faith dimension he considered the relationships within and among religions overseas which affect those within Australia e.g. historical factors and theological differences. In recent years inter-faith tolerance has improved greatly, and has extended to non-Christian world religions.

In the broader society he considered it could be appropriate to review the country's laws to cater for the religious pluralism and avoid discrimination on the grounds of religion or race (Penman, D. 1987:58-62).

Evidence of the growing inter-faith co-operation and concern for the Churches' and society's ethnically-diverse realities can be seen in the publication of *The Cultured Pearl* (1986), "the first book solely devoted to the exploration of religions in the multicultural society" of Australia.

The Victorian Council of Churches Commission on Living Faiths and Community Relations sought funding from the Victorian 150th Anniversary Board for the *Intercultural Theological Education in a Multi-Faith Society* (ITEMS) project and engaged Jim Houston as its project officer; the book was one result of this. An interesting feature of the Victorian Council of Churches is that nine of its fifteen member Churches are "ethnic" from non-English-speaking countries (Houston, J. ed. 1986:101).

As Archbishop Penman comments in his "foreward" despite the incredible variety of peoples, languages, and religious traditions in Australia and the amount written on "multiculturalism", very little addresses "the interface between theology (even church life and ministry) and the multicultural reality around us" (Penman, D. 1986:XII).

He says that the Bicentennial celebrations have not given "adequate recognition" to religion in Australia's history. Actually, the grant for the ITEMS project was given "not in recognition of Christianity's contribution to our development but rather because of the presence of other faiths and the need
for the Churches to find new ways of relating to the multi-faith society in which we now live" (Penman, D. 1986:XII).

The contributions come from members of several Churches and cover a wide variety of topics including the Aboriginal dimension. Reference has been made already to several articles in *The Cultured Pearl* and several have been selected for comment here - i.e. those most directly on issues of ethnic diversity.

From the perspective of a theologian in a cross-cultural college, Carrington considers theology as having to cope "at the end of an era". Theologians tend to a world-view conditioned by their culture. Australian Christianity with its European background and monocultural assumptions is struggling to develop a pluralistic approach to cope with the actual diversity in society. He sees positive development occurring in basic Christian communities where two-way sharing can open the way to a new articulation of the Gospel. His experience with Aborigines at Nungalinya College, Darwin, leads him to "suggest that an intercultural theological education in Australia is both possible and full of promise" (Carrington, D. 1986:26).

Cox's paper aims to clarify the meaning of "multiculturalism" for the Churches and to suggest its significance. He outlines the general "multicultural" scene in Australian society and in the Churches, and continues that even if Churches accept the "multicultural" ideology, they face great problems in implementing it, especially in the areas of structures and worship patterns. Religious multiculturalism "would mean the endorsement of religious pluralism, the rejection of discrimination on religious grounds and the endorsement of a secular state to ensure a measure of equality of participation by all religions and other groups" (Cox, D. 1986:120). Unless the Churches make necessary modifications for a "multicultural" society, religion will be a divisive force.
The multi-faith aspect is reported by Painter writing about the seminar held in 1985 and planned by representatives of the Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh religions, and attended by an Aborigine.

Painter reflects that each religion is a response to the mystery of life. "The religions of the world testify to the persistent belief that there is a meaning and a purpose" and offer different understandings of the meaning of life (Painter, J. 1986:145-6). To meet the challenge of better mutual understanding and acceptance despite faith differences, the seminar moved to establish a Multi-faith Resource Centre in Melbourne - seen by Penman as a hopeful sign for the future (Penman, D. 1987:60).

Practical plans for theological education are proposed by Houston's ITEMS Course which was produced as a result of research into the challenges facing the Church today and to develop "a tertiary level course for ... theological training colleges on the role of the Church in multicultural societies" (Houston, J. 1986:205). Discussions were held with a wide variety of Church leaders and training institutions and representatives from minority ethnic groups. With insights gained from that practical base the programme for "multicultural" theological education for the clergy was devised.

Evans' research concerned parish education and the on-going education of the clergy. He saw the goals for such a programme to be: a) to create and improve awareness and understanding of "multiculturalism"; and b) to instigate and foster change within the structures of the Church and the wider community toward a more just "multicultural" society (Evans, J. 1986:228). He argues that a multi-faceted approach is needed and sets out programmes and approaches for parish and clergy education. He concludes that there is a need for a broad reappraisal of ministry and mission in view of the dissonance between the monocultural leadership in the mainstream Churches and the cultural diversity of Australian society.
Matheson considers refugee work in some detail and draws the attention of the Churches to "review their commitments and involvements" re migrants and refugees in the light of the present-day socio-economic situation. He calls for theological reflection on this ministry, for work against racism and the development of the ecumenical dimension of refugee work (Matheson, A. 1986:122-6).

In conclusion, Protestant Churches, like the Catholic, have in many cases moved from trying to assimilate newcomers to accepting a "multicultural" composition of their congregations. On the initiative of the Victorian Council of Churches research was undertaken among Christian Churches concerning religion in a poly-ethnic society and the results published in the first such book in Australia. Need was expressed for more theological study of "multicultural" issues, for cross-cultural dialogue within the Churches and inter-faith dialogue among the different denominations. Educational programmes for clergy and parishes have been prepared after appropriate research.
4.1 Objectives
In order to extend and investigate further the findings of the literature on migration, culture and religious experience, a Case Study was constructed with particular reference to one significant experience - First Holy Communion. The main objectives were:

a) To investigate the relationship between the migration process and migrant women's practice of religion in Australia;
b) To discover what migrant women feel are the differences in rearing their children in their religious traditions in the original homeland and in Australia;
c) To identify the importance of cultural factors affecting the way migrant women experience religious events in Australia;
d) To compare the meaning of a significant religious event - First Holy Communion - in the migrants' original homeland and in Australia.

4.2 Description
The Case Study involved six immigrant women of one ethnic group (Lebanese-Syrian) who had experienced their own First Holy Communion in their country of origin, and a comparable group of Anglophone Australian-born women whose children were experiencing the same Sacramental programme in a Catholic parish school. To gain as comprehensive a view as possible of the whole process of First Communion in the parish, eight key informants were interviewed also, and all associated events, e.g. preparatory sessions, were observed. Finally, evaluations were obtained from the women and children.
4.3 Methodology

Several methods of data collection were employed.

4.3.1 PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH MOTHERS

In-depth interviews were conducted with the women. These were based on a written questionnaire that was basically the same for both the overseas-born and the Australian-born women, except for a few specific questions (Appendix I). The interviews were arranged by telephone and took place almost entirely in the homes. The average time taken was about an hour, but some extended beyond that e.g. when children needed attention.

The interviews were based on written questionnaires. That for the women was prefaced by a section seeking factual data that would assist in understanding their responses. Information sought covered early life and education, the migration experience, (or for the Australian-born, experience overseas) length of residence, age and employment. The main section was in four parts that dealt with the woman's religious practice and parish participation in the original homeland and in Australia, rearing her children religiously today, her own First Communion experience and her preparation/expectations for that of her child.

For the arranging and conduct of the interviews with the overseas-born women, the researcher had the assistance of an interpreter.

4.3.2 INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS

Eight key informants also were interviewed, selected from the parish team and school staff associated with the Grade Three classes. There were four men and four women. These were: the parish priest and two members of his team who work especially among immigrant families, the school principal, two Grade Three teachers, the community liaison person and the one engaged on a special Religious Education and Multicultural Project. These interviews took
place at the school, presbytery or parish house. So as to gain comparable views, the key informants were asked questions selected from the main questionnaire with a few specific to their perspective (Appendix II).

4.3.3 OBSERVATION AND PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION
Observation and Participant-observation were other means used for data collection. The researcher attended all parish preparation sessions which entailed: a) the parent-teacher meeting at the beginning of the year; b) a designated Sunday Mass to begin the preparation followed by an explanatory meeting; c) a celebration of Reconciliation before the First Communions; and d) classroom religion lessons.

The First Communions took place during six regular Masses spread over three successive Sundays. At all of these, plus the sacramental celebrations during the preparatory period, the researcher was a participant-observer.

4.3.4 EVALUATIONS OF FIRST COMMUNION EXPERIENCE
The evaluation process after the Communions was planned as group interviews with the overseas-born women and the Australian-born. When only one of the former, and two of the latter turned up for the meetings, evaluations were received mainly by telephone and were based on a list of simple questions (Appendix IV).

The two classes were combined for a short visit to get the children's view of the First Communion experience.
4.4 Issues of Implementation
There were some practical problems associated with this Case Study.

4.4.1 SUBJECTS FOR THE CASE STUDY
To locate groups with the required characteristics for the study, a wide-ranging investigation was conducted by telephone among parish schools with large migrant populations. Enquiries showed that in some areas "migrant" mothers were actually second or third generation Australian! Many schools had considerable ethnic diversity in their Communion classes, but insufficient numbers of any one group. For a small study it was deemed necessary to concentrate on one group of similar cultural background.

Finally, in an inner-western suburb of Sydney a parish school was contacted which had two Grade Three classes being prepared for First Communion in the earlier part of the year. The principal and staff were interested in the research project. An examination of the children's backgrounds showed that the only group of similar cultural background whose mothers had made their own First Communion in the original homeland was the Lebanese-Syrian. Therefore this case study involved a group of five overseas-born women of Lebanese background with one of Syrian background and six Anglophone Australian-born women.

4.4.2 THE QUESTIONNAIRE
Before it was given a trial, the main questionnaire was offered to the Principal and relevant staff members for comment/suggestions. One person of Lebanese background and fluent in Arabic, explained points which could be difficult for women of that culture.
4.4.3 THE INTERVIEWS

Interviews were arranged by telephone. At that time the reasons for the research were explained, and that confidentially would be respected. The Australian-born women were asked if they agreed to the interview being taped.

These calls to the overseas-born women were made in Arabic by the interpreter so as to avoid any misunderstanding or confusion.

In most cases, for both groups, there was considerable difficulty in making telephone contact as most women seemed to have various commitments outside the home. This problem of making contact, then arranging a time, led in one case to the interpreter alone taking one interview with a migrant woman while the researcher was with an Australian-born mother.

Generally the interviews took place in the homes which was more convenient, especially for those with small children who required attention during the proceedings. One overseas-born interviewee, in addition to her own small children, also had a number of others from the extended family to care for. Her mother was at hand to assist with the children. During most of the interviews with the immigrant women, their husbands appeared. Several prepared and served coffee and refreshments and helped with the little children. Two introduced Lebanese politics into the conversation over coffee but the researcher avoided taking up such a contentious issue.

Two of the Australian-born interviews were done over two sessions due to unforeseen circumstances. It was judged better to take the time needed rather than to rush the interviews. Both women were happy with this arrangement.
4.4.4 THE INTERPRETER

It was advantageous to have the services of an interpreter who was familiar with topics covered and who established good rapport with the respondents. Nevertheless, there were perceived limitations. The researcher was conscious of the possibility of missing many implications and perhaps points which one would have pursued oneself. Information received through an intermediary is not the same as direct communication. To know the other language would be the ideal.
CHAPTER 5: THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

The results reported in this chapter are as follows:

5.1 Data from Interviews;
5.2 Data from Observations and Participant-observation;
5.3 Perspectives of First Holy Communion.

5.1 Data from Interviews

5.1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The initial section of the questionnaire sought factual data to aid in understanding the respondents' answers.

Questions covered early life, education and work experience since attitudes and values are acquired in one's early years. The migration experience, whether direct or not, the age at and circumstances in which it occurred are significant for the person's adjustment in the new homeland. Likewise, for the Australian-born, having spent time in another culture can broaden one's outlook and perceptions of reality.

Length of residence may affect one's interpersonal relationships in the area, as well as one's experience of Church.

Cultural attitudes affect religious practice because it is within a certain way of life that one receives religious training and follows its customs. Traditionally the Church in Australia has taken the rule of Sunday Mass observance as a norm of the "practising Catholic". Other societies may regard themselves as equally "Catholic" without the observance of any such behavioural norm. The question on Mass attendance seeks some understanding of the importance of the Mass in the women's lives today.

Half the overseas-born women grew up in a village and half in town or city; of the latter one spent summers in the country. The Australian-born were mainly from cities, while a couple grew up in country towns.
Although the education systems are different, overall the two groups had approximately similar educational backgrounds: several in each group had completed secondary school, gaining Baccalaureat/Leaving/HSC, whereas the rest had some years secondary education.

All the immigrant women came to Australia directly, hence the cultural change was not mitigated by any intervening experience. Among the Australian-born four had travelled and/or worked overseas, mainly to Europe. The shortest stay was two weeks, the longest over a year.

For the overseas-born the average length of time in Australia was 10.8 years with most having arrived between 1972 and 1978, and one in 1986. The average age on arrival for the earlier group was 17.8 years, but overall, 19.8 years.

The average age now of these women is 30.6 years ranging from 27-33 years. The Australian-born average 37.3 years at present, ranging from 29-43 years. Hence the overseas-born average age is 6.7 years younger than the Australian-born.

A comparable difference appeared in the average age at which the overseas-born had had their first child, i.e. 20.1 years ranging from 18-26 years, whereas the Australian-born average was 26.7 years ranging from 21-27 years. Moreover, it was observed that most of the overseas-born women had four children while most of the Australian-born had three.

Three of the immigrant women had established their family unit in Australia, two in Lebanon but had their children here and one had all her children in the homeland. All but one of these women had been employed in Australia at some stage: one as a process worker for a number of years, two in clothing factories for a few months after arrival, one did part-time domestic work intermittently over years. Two were currently employed (in domestic work and a family business).
Until they had children, all the Australian-born women had worked in offices, teaching or nursing. Currently, three had part-time employment (clerical/teaching) and one did full-time clerical work. A limiting factor regarding outside employment for several of both groups was very young children.

Both groups had lived in the parish a comparable time. The average residence of the overseas-born was 9.1 years, but excluding a fairly recent arrival, the average was 10.6 years and the total range was 2-14 years. The Australian-born averaged 10-years, ranging from 4-12 years. Therefore all had had time to settle, except perhaps the most recent arrival.

Since establishing their family unit, four of the overseas-born had lived only in this parish in Australia whereas only one Australian-born had; the rest ranged from one to four years. For the migrant group, proximity to their own language churches and to relations could be reasons for their stability.

In both groups, Sunday Mass was customary for the majority. In each group one person went occasionally.

5.1.2 CATEGORIES FOR ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

Data was obtained through interviews based on written questionnaires. That for the women was prefaced by a section on factual background (Appendix I) and has been arranged under eight categories (Appendix III) as each relates to the main focus - the First Communion experience - ranging from the general social milieu to the proximate family preparations, as follows:

5.1.2.1 - Social Change and Its Influence;
5.1.2.2 - The General Community;
5.1.2.3 - Multi-ethnic Society and Culturally-diverse Church;
5.1.2.4 - The Parish School;
5.1.2.5 - Parish and Priests;
5.1.2.6 - Mass and Holy Communion;
5.1.2.7 - Expectations from the Homeland Experience; and
5.1.2.8 - Family Preparations and Attitudes.

Related responses from Key Informants (Appendix II) follow each relevant section.

5.1.2.1 Social Change and Its Influence
"Profound and rapid changes" have followed the modern scientific and technological revolutions. In changed situations many formerly accepted values are now challenged while traditional institutions and norms are often inadequate to current situations - all of which impacts on religion. (Abbott, W. ed. 1966:201-7). Such too, is the Australian scene wherein the women are raising their families.

They were asked what were the most helpful and most harmful social influences affecting their rearing their children religiously today (Q.2.1).

The Overseas-born Response
The interpreter indicated that these concepts could be difficult because in the women's homeland experience religion was integrated into society. This could explain why they responded from different perspectives but the final results were similar.

Half responded negatively: "nothing"/"nothing much" helps, but their comments clarified that the family is the helpful influence, e.g. one replied that "there is only the family here," whereas in the homeland the whole community helped by lived example.

Positive answers named family/parents because they pray with children, teach them traditional religious songs. Overall, the family was seen as the main positive influence.
Would it be different were they in the homeland? All but one responded "yes": there the child experiences religiousness in the community ... "the flavour is different"; there is more emphasis on religious education; there was one people with the same outlook, "a Catholic town", but here there are many nationalities and differences. One said children have more freedom here which can be good if used correctly. Another replied there is no difference for she is rearing her children in the same manner here.

Opinions differed concerning the most harmful social influence. Three named the media because of its widespread influence, the inability to control programmes, unsuitable advertisements even during children's viewing. Two said there were many harmful influences; one specified drugs as evil. Two spoke of irreligion - in the general society where "there is no passion for anything" and in families which fail to pass any religious training on to their children.

Again, all but one thought it would be different rearing children in the homeland, mainly because religious values are integrated into daily life, the community is responsible for good example, TV programmes are more controlled. However, one thought now it would probably be the same as here since television reaches everywhere.

The Australian-born Response
These women regarded the most helpful social influence on their children's upbringing as a "united," "loving" or "good extended" family, with one focussing on parent-child relationships. Two considered educational areas: more positive religious education today plus better education for parenting, and the influence of the Catholic School and local Church. Additional comments were that family discipline was difficult to maintain because of peer pressure. Two were trying to rear their children according to the principles by
which they had been raised. One found friendships with like-minded families helpful.

For the majority, the most negative social influences were the adverse effects of the media which is "so pervasive", it "surrounds" and "bombards" the children and even their programmes contain unsuitable advertisements, hence the mother has to be constantly alert when television is on. One commented that the persuasive promotion of materialism and consumerism was hard enough for even adults to withstand. Two commented on the false values presented by the media.

One mother found peer pressure the greatest problem, especially regarding television programmes and clothes, because other children have what hers are not allowed. This was extended by another's comments on effects of television via the peer group for even her child's name was "uncool". Violence was the most harmful influence according to another.

**Comparison**

Overall, the overseas-born women considered that here, the family was the most helpful social influence for rearing their children in their faith. Most of the Australian-born agreed. Whereas the overseas-born gave as their reasons family religious praxis, the Australian-born spoke of relationships. The remaining Australian-born mothers named educational factors. In both groups were women rearing their children as they had been themselves.

Regarding the harmful influences the overseas-born responses were a little more varied them those of the Australian-born: media, especially television, drugs, consumerism, irreligion. Most of the Australian-born named the media, particularly television, plus peer pressure and violence.

Comments were similar concerning the inability to control programmes and unsuitable advertisements during children's sessions, the pervasiveness of the media and its false values.
In both groups were mothers concerned about peer pressure on their children from those whose parents "don't seem to care" or who fail to impart religious/moral instruction.

Generally the overseas-born women agreed that it would be different were they rearing their children in their original homeland, chiefly because they came from communities where religious practice was an integral part of daily life and children learned by living in a society which felt responsible for its young members and where family life was very important. One thought the situation possibly had changed by this.

Key Informants' Response

Most key informants (seven) considered that the family was the most helpful influence, although one noted it can be unhelpful also. Whatever structure "the family" takes today, it remains the child's basic support system, the place where (s)he acquires attitudes and values. Two mentioned the parish school as supporting and extending the family's religious training.

One saw the parish school as the most helpful influence because many children lack any religious training in the home, so it can no longer be assumed that such exists. Another commented that access to greater educational opportunity was a compelling reason why migrant families emigrated.

These respondents offered a wider range of harmful influences on religious upbringing, although again, half named the media. Television particularly appeals to the senses, is entertaining, very professional; its influence is "subtle" even "insidious", exerting "incredible power" over children who as yet have not developed skills to cope with it. Migrant children are more affected because of the clash of cultures (seen on television and experienced at home), especially those from Asia, Middle East and Eastern Europe.
One respondent asserted that individualism, as fostered by the media and supported by consumerism, was the most harmful influence because it does not lead to the development of the whole person with his/her individuality, but to self-centredness and competitiveness.

Another saw it to be the all-pervasive materialism and hedonism in modern society. Another opinion was the lack of clear definition of right and wrong that causes confusion, as people make their own decisions, usually strong on rights and weak on responsibilities, consequently, children are confused. One held that the greatest harm comes from immigrant parents who cling to their traditions, are not open to change, yet have children growing up in a changed society. This causes tensions and mixed values for children.

5.1.2.2 The General Community
"General community" is a somewhat contradictory expression for the local area wherein the women live and rear their children. It is perhaps little more than a political/administrative region rather than a "community" in the sense of being based on relationships. Nevertheless, it is the family's immediate physical social milieu. The women were asked the most important thing that community did for the children's religious upbringing (Q.2.2d).

The Overseas-born Response
For half of these women (three) "community" meant the Lebanese community which is a source of "encouragement" and "example" for the children (one specifically mentioned the Maronite priests in this regard). One seemed ambivalent, another had no contact with either community, and one considered that it did very little here. So, all in all, the general community was not regarded as of any assistance in the religious upbringing of children.
The Australian-born Response

These, likewise, gave negative responses (five) while one said friends offered friendship and tolerance. One women who had suffered severe verbal abuse and harassment when out with her small children now values highly the Christian parish support for her family, fearing for their welfare in the general community. Another relates only to her friends because of the high incidence of violence and crime in society.

Comparison

The overseas-born who maintain close links with their own ethnic community derive support and encouragement therefrom. An Australian-born woman values the parish support. No one found much help from the general community for the religious upbringing of children.

Key Informants' Response

The majority of key informants (five) also responded negatively, adding that the general attitude was apathetic or legalistic.

Two noted that it offered children a chance to try their own values, but negatively, is also a forum of conflicting values. Occasionally, via the media, there is an example of public outrage over some issue. One respondent commented on the strength of ethnic community support, especially in time of need.

5.1.2.3 Multi-ethnic Society and Culturally-diverse Church

Over the past forty years immigration has brought to Australia many people of different cultural backgrounds, with a variety of religious beliefs or with no religious upbringing. The women were asked whether they considered this cultural variety helpful as they reared their children in the faith, and what they
hoped the children would gain from this experience of growing up in a poly-
ethnic, multi-religious society (Q. 2.5).

The Second Vatican Council reiterated the Church's traditional doctrine
that the Eucharist is the greatest means of union with God (personal aspect)
and with one another (social aspect) ... the faithful "should be drawn ... into
closer union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all"
(Abbott , W. 1966:154). Therefore, since First Communion is an important
event for the children, their families and the parish, the women were asked
whether they experienced any difficulties in sharing such religious
experiences in their new homeland (Q.4.9).

**The Overseas-born Response (Q.2.5)**

Three responded positively concerning cultural variety because "it is good to
learn other ways of being Catholic" (two) and one valued the wider, richer
experience her child has. Of the others, two said simply that it did not help and
one explained that a multitude of different ideas confuses children.

When asked to specify social and religious benefits of experiencing
ethnic diversity, some found such categories difficult, because, obviously it
was an unfamiliar approach. Hoped for social gains were: to retain their own
cultural traditions (two), to appreciate the good in others and be tolerant and
accepting of others (four) and to be treated reciprocally (one). Significantly, the
recent-arrival spoke of living peacefully with others. One hoped her children
would mix well. Religiously, it was hoped that they would appreciate their own
faith (three) while learning new expressions of it (one), or be enriched (one),
while one woman simply wanted her children "to stay good Catholics".

**The Australian-born Response**

Most of these women (four) affirmed that the ethnically-diverse environment
was helpful because it "broadens" the children's outlook (two), they become
more tolerant of different lifestyles (two) and the "us-them syndrome" of former
days has gone. For the remainder (two) it is "a fact of life" to be accepted.

Five hoped their children will gain tolerance and be accepting of others
and one hoped that they will learn the good from other lifestyles. One
commented that immigrant people should also be willing to adjust socially and
quoted their adamant stand for an "elaborate" celebration of First Communion,
in the face of current parish policy.

Desired religious benefits were enrichment (two) one of whom
specifically mentioned other rites; while a third hoped they would be tolerant
and appreciative of other rites. Two hoped their children will choose for
themselves to remain Catholic and one mentioned the possible ambiguity, i.e.
faith could be reinforced or weakened by the diversity available. One woman
hoped her children will value their own faith.

One respondent recalled how, in her mature years, she was shocked to
learn of the existence of rites other than the Latin rite in the Catholic Church.
She felt strongly that she had been wrongly taught.

Comparison
The Australian-born affirmed the value of rearing children religiously in a multi-
ethnic society more than did the overseas-born (4:3). For half of the latter it is
no help. Two of the Australian-born are "making the best of it."

In each group half hoped that their children will grow in tolerance and
acceptance of others. In both cases, someone hoped they would learn the
good things in other cultures.

The overseas-born women's hopes for religious benefits from the
ethnically-diverse environment, i.e. for their children's retaining or appreciating
their faith while being enriched and broadened by knowledge of other rites,
were somewhat firmer than those of the Australian-born since two of these
valued the child's freedom to choose the religion later on.
Key Informants' Response

The majority of key informants (six) responded affirmatively regarding rearing children religiously in a multi-ethnic society. It was "challenging" (two), expressed the Catholicity of the Church (four) was a stimulus to renewal (one), lessened racism and negativism (one) and helped children to cope in the real world which is ethnically-diverse (one). However, two responses pointed out that the situation could be helpful for teaching religion but is not necessarily so, e.g. the difficulty of expressing religious concepts in language understandable to a group of children from various language backgrounds.

Desired benefits to be gained were wide-ranging. Loosely grouped, social gains were: tolerance of others (three) to be peacemakers (two), cultural enrichment (one), to value their own and others' uniqueness and cultures (three), "a thirst to know and value people" (one).

Their views on religious benefits from an ethnically-diverse society likewise were varied: to value their own religious heritage (one), and appreciate God's presence in other traditions (two), to be aware of and appreciate diverse spiritualities/rites in the Church (two), to understand the Church as universal (one), enrichment (one), to realize God loves and forgives everyone so they must do likewise (one).

The Overseas-born Response (Q4.9)

Several (three) reported "no problems" in sharing religious experiences such as First Holy Communion with one commenting that "Catholics are Catholics regardless of nationality". Others mentioned language difficulties (although all but one now speak English). One found English a problem when native speakers are too fast for her, and she does not know other ethnic groups. Another prayed in Arabic during English Masses. A woman who also mentioned the language problem across diverse national groups also pointed out that people today have many commitments and little time left to socialize.
out that people today have many commitments and little time left to socialize.

One reported a painful experience at the school when she had tried to explain her traditions to some Australians who "made us feel not worthwhile", but she had no difficulties at all with non-English neighbours.

No suggestions to overcome the difficulty were offered.

The Australian-born Response
All the Australian-born mothers asserted that they had "no problems" sharing experiences with others. Two claimed that they and their children wanted to share the First Communion event but were prevented by the present system. For one, the only problems in the parish were that many longtime parishioners were opposed to any change, and that ethnic groups preferred their own family celebration to a parish one e.g. for First Communion, therefore different mentalities made community celebration difficult. Another observed that "integration" in the parish was progressing well (in context, "integration" meant that people got on well together). One mother who supported the "new style" of First Communion felt strongly that her child would celebrate within the regular Sunday congregation which had seen her grow up.

No suggestions were offered apart from measures to improve First Communion celebrations, but these will be dealt with elsewhere.

Comparison
The overseas-born women claimed they had no problems apart from language and time, except for one who had had a painful experience at school. All the Australian-born mothers likewise said they had no difficulties sharing religious experiences; some wanted to. One indicated that different mentalities, fundamentally the inability to change, made sharing difficult within or across cultures.
Key Informants' Response

These people continued giving diverse opinions. It needs be said that some spoke from local experience whereas others generalized about those areas in which they were not actually involved.

Difficulties associated with sharing religious events in the parish were: language (three), cultural differences and "cultural freeze" (whereby migrants preserve the image of how it was in the homeland resulting in false expectations here), different levels of education and of faith development (three). One had found nothing negative across all groups.

Most suggestions for overcoming the difficulties concerned building up the parish as a community at the human, social level as a basis for shared religious celebrations in the future. Apparently much is already being done in this regard. One envisaged a dynamic parish council with clearly defined roles and expectations, including those of the parish priest, which would be involved with him in parish organization and life and build up Christian community.

Another saw a need for on-going religious education because people are at all levels of faith development amid various cultural expressions of basic Gospel truths.

Two mentioned structural changes being needed in parishes: a) to build up quality relationships; or b) to meet the needs of the multi-ethnic composition of the Church e.g. this parish is 85 per cent "migrant" background.

Concerning language, one informant suggested involving bilingual persons at meetings. Although the parish has many traditional groups e.g. St. Vincent de Paul groups, they are composed of longstanding Anglophone parishioners. Migrants tend to associate with their own kind.

Several informants asserted strongly that this parish deserves high praise for its efforts over recent years to bring different groups together socially and so build real community.

Three questions followed, specific to this group (Q.4.9 c.d.e.).
The first asked whether events such as the First Communion actually touched parishioners other than those directly concerned. Three replied negatively, one adding that people are not touched unless involved in the preparation. Five said people are at least aware of the event because of its being spread over three Sundays and six Masses.

Those informants involved with the First Communion were asked if they experienced any difficulties. Four mentioned language problems and attitudes of parents wanting the "old way". For another it was the diversity of parental expectations. A big problem is that at present the school is the organizational body which has to follow parish policy while trying to be sensitive to parental wishes. Several would like greater parental involvement in the preparation for, and organization of, sacramental programmes. This would entail much discussion and co-operation between parish team, school and parents, together with careful planning over time and parent education. Another agreed with this general idea but considered it impracticable at present.

The third question concerned migrant chaplains. Did they have any role in the First Communion? Responses were negative. Comments were varied: migrant chaplains are welcome; they are hard to contact and have never accepted invitations to parish functions; some children repeat their "First" Communion in their own language Church; ideally there is a role for them in the First Communion which would incorporate the "two worlds" of the child but the logistics of actually achieving this would be very complex.

5.1.2.4 The Parish School
The Catholic Church maintains that every human person has the right to an education enabling him/her to live responsibly and peacefully with others and to attain the "ultimate goal". Since "parents have conferred life on their children" they are their "first and foremost educators" (Abbott, W. 1966:641).
In this section the focus is on the Catholic primary school's contribution to the religious upbringing of their children, and also, the mother's reasons for choosing such education (Q.2.2b and 2.4).

The Overseas-born Response
Asked what they considered the most important thing the parish school did for their children's religious upbringing, all these women's responses concerned religious education: such teaching is given in various forms, is part of a good education and discipline, and children are taught prayer and respect.

All chose the parish school because they wanted a Catholic education for their children, so that they continue in a similar environment to the home (three).

Their satisfaction with the religious instruction given there was less enthusiastic. One gave an unqualified "yes" because the varied methods used are very helpful. Two found it "all right" so far although one thought children could learn more if teachers taught them more. One mother was interested in finding out more about religious education here, which was different to what she had known. Two admitted dissatisfaction because everything is different and children are "not learning enough".

The Australian-born Response
These women all replied differently. The school supplies formal doctrinal teaching, supports family teaching and integrates religion with all subjects; builds on parents' work; supports home pastoral care; reinforces home's love and support; has good discipline and respect for teachers. Additional comments noted that religious teaching today is more "subtle" and one valued the school community atmosphere that builds on the family model.

Basically their own faith was the reason they chose the Catholic school: one, familiar with state and Catholic systems, preferred the Catholic
atmosphere; another considered a Catholic primary education was "an invaluable basis for the Christian life"; another wanted her children to have "firm faith". One commented that education and behaviour are better in the Catholic schools.

Opinions varied also on the religious instruction provided by the school. Two were satisfied "but. ..." one wanted to know more about it and the other disagreed with the plans regarding First Communion. One found primary school religious instruction satisfactory but not the secondary level because she maintained that the teachers at that level were not trained to teach religion, and often were not personally committed to the faith and their attitudes were passed on to the students. Three were quite ambivalent, mainly because they considered that their children lacked basic knowledge, including traditional prayers and practices, and knew far less than they had as children. Two regretted the lack of "nuns" at the school.

Comparison

The overseas-born mothers considered that the Catholic school's religious education supports and adds variety to home teaching, whereas the Australian-born took a broader view to include general educational aspects as well. Someone in each group mentioned "discipline" and "respect".

The underlying reason for all the women choosing the Catholic school was their own faith and the desire that their children be educated and grow up in that religion.

Over both groups only one expressed unqualified satisfaction with the religious instruction in the primary school; for her it varied and extended the instruction given at home. In both groups two or three felt their children were deficient in basic knowledge of traditional prayers, practices, doctrine. The overseas-born (two) claimed children could learn more whereas the Australian-born (three) compared today's shortfall in knowledge with what they
had acquired at similar age. Thus, despite slightly different perspectives, the overall opinions were comparable - the religious education is satisfactory to some but others would prefer more content.

Key Informants' Response

These were asked what they considered was the most important thing the school contributed to the children's religious upbringing (Q2.2b). Again they offered a variety of responses.

The greatest agreement was that the school gave an example of Christian community and relationships (five): where a common vision and relationships among staff and with the children are based on the Gospel thus giving them a living example; where teachers are "powerful role models"; where children develop a sense of belonging to the Church. The school helps to affirm the children in their own traditions, to appreciate diversity and form a school community. A related response was that the parish school teaches Christian moral values, presenting Christ as the model for life.

Key informants also pointed out that all Catholic schools are not necessarily the same: many have not thought through the implications of parent-involvement and have missed out on the social contacts necessary as preparation for parents to co-operate on sacramental programmes. Several respondents spoke of the growing parental involvement at this school which is very conscious of, and trying to work with, family values and faith development. One key informant praised highly the work being done at the local parish school but commented otherwise on "an appalling lack of faith and commitment" among some teachers in Catholic schools, especially at the secondary level. This comment was made, less strongly, by a second informant also. Reasons given were lack of training in religious education for secondary teachers, different kinds of teachers at that level, and the selection process for secondary teachers.
5.1.2.5 Parish and Priests

The Church, considering the modern migration phenomenon, indicates that in the Universal Church, no emigrant is ever "an outsider". The local Church of arrival bears the main pastoral responsibility for migrants, is to welcome them with understanding and respect so that all may live "together calmly in harmony" (Rome 1978:11-12).

The parish provides the social context wherein the sacraments are received. The priest is the local representative of the Bishop, and thus of the Universal Church and is a key person since he is necessary to offer Mass.

Parish

As an indication of participation in parish life, the women were asked about group activities (Q.1.4), and what they thought the parish did for their children (Q.2.2c).

The Overseas-born Response

None of the overseas-born women are involved in any parish group. One remarked that she attends school meetings. In the homeland, half had belonged to choirs or prayer groups.

What did they think the parish did for their children's religious upbringing? One replied "nothing directly" other than the opportunity to practise what they learned at home. The rest had no direct contact with the parish while one referred to the Lebanese Church as her children's Christian community.

The Australian-born Response

Among these, half are active in parish groups i.e. the Liturgy Committee and Lector (reads Scripture at Mass).
These mothers all saw the parish as offering children Christian community and/or community worship and sacraments. Some comments were that this is "a good parish", there is a big effort made to build community, but on the other hand, one remarked that it offers little for children who do not identify with it.

**Comparison**

Although among the overseas-born women no one is involved in any parish group, in the homeland the same percentage was involved as is found presently among the Australian-born in this parish. The overseas-born considered that the parish did nothing for the religious upbringing of their children, most likely because they have no contact with it. On the other hand, the Australian-born had a positive view of Christian community/worship/sacraments, except for one who said the parish offered nothing other than Mass and the Sacraments.

**Key Informants' Response**

This group responded to what they considered the parish offered for the religious upbringing of children (Q.2.2c).

Half of the replies concerned community worship and sacraments. Comments were: worship had to be "meaningful" for children; two included leadership, one queried "community" worship which implies a basis of quality relationships which generally is not found in parishes. For one, home visitation was a vital parish contribution.

Three gave negative responses, that the parish does very little for children. One saw a contradiction in the way in which the Sacraments of Initiation are administered, in that usually there is no follow-up in the parish. Another noted that children of immigrants oscillate between local Church and national language Church. In the same vein, another respondent remarked
that the present liturgy fails to address the "multicultural" nature of the Church today.

**Priests**

The women were asked about their contact with priests (Q.1.5).

**Overseas-born Response**

Contact with priests was rare among the overseas-born except in two cases, of which one's contact was now with the local priests, and the other's, the Lebanese. The others had no contact except one who referred to the Lebanese priest when need arose.

Two found the Australian priests very approachable (both spoke English well), one the Lebanese, and a couple felt comfortable about approaching the Lebanese priests should the need arise. One received spiritual help from her family; one felt comfortable in such matters with the Lebanese priests who shared her traditions; two would seek help from them if in need but two had no contacts.

Comparing their relationships with Australian and Lebanese priests, one could not compare them yet as she only knew the latter; one had no contact with either; for two it made no difference now that they speak English and one now prefers the Australian priests whom she finds more friendly.

**The Australian-born Response**

Among the Australian-born mothers only two had much contact with priests. All had found them approachable in the contacts they had had, while two had had very positive experiences. For spiritual help two preferred an "impartial" unknown adviser whereas the others felt they could approach the local priests should the need arise.
Comparison

On the whole, for the overseas-born women who are well established here and speak English, it would appear that there is no great difference in their attitude to, and contact with, local priests compared with that of the Australian-born. The more recently arrived felt at ease with her own tradition and language. A difference was that two Australian-born women would seek spiritual assistance rather from someone they did not know.

5.1.2.6 Mass and Holy Communion

The Mass is the Church's central act of worship and its great means to promote unity (Constitution on Sacred Liturgy #10). The Church desires that peoples' participation therein be "full, conscious and active" (#14).

The children's First Communion marks their entering more fully into the parish Eucharistic worship. Their mother's attitudes and training will affect the children's religious practice and development (Q1.1, 1.2, 1.3).

Mass

The Overseas-born Response

All enjoyed Mass in their homeland. Most had difficulty specifying a significant aspect of the Mass because the whole experience was meaningful for them (two), but for some celebrating shared faith with the community was very important (three) especially on feastdays (one). One valued the Scripture readings.

Now in Australia their stated preference for Sunday Mass was divided evenly between the parish Mass and their own language Mass. Among the latter, two preferred their language and one the old style and chants. Of those who preferred the English Mass, two did so because their children understood it better, and one was fluent in both languages.
There was no difference in emphasis as to what meant most to them beyond two who said "the whole Mass" in the first instance mentioned the Readings now.

Some significant comments were offered. Three women mentioned that language is necessary for prayer. One described in detail the Easter ceremonies in the homeland wherein the whole community participated and the community feeling was "overwhelming". Although fluent in English, she seemed to find the ceremonies here less emotionally satisfying because the feeling was different. Several explained that knowing the community, participating fully in the responses and celebrating together were important aspects of the Mass in the homeland and again - the feeling was different.

The significance now of receiving Communion at Mass was seen as receiving Christ (two) and participating fully in the Mass (two) and described in terms of its effects e.g. feelings of peace, of being cleansed, made whole again. One respondent observed perceptively that in the Eucharist different traditions do not count because "Eucharist is Eucharist".

The Australian-born Response

This group also enjoyed the Mass. For them the significant aspects were: the whole Mass (three), the Consecration (two), quiet reflection and the singing (one). The reasons given were mainly the teaching they received as children, but one has no other opportunity to reflect quietly on life.

The significance of receiving Communion at Mass was seen as receiving Christ (two) full participation in the Mass by partaking of the spiritual Food (two) being closely united with the faith community (one) and a closer union with God resulting in peace (one).

In addition, one person traced her spiritual development from her youthful outlook to her present maturer view of faith expressed now by
celebrating with and in the Church community at Mass, of which Communion is an integral part.

Comparison
All the women claimed to like assisting at Mass. For the majority (five) of the overseas-born celebrating Mass together with the community is generally the most meaningful for them, whereas this was so for half the Australian-born women, the others having a more personal approach.

The significance of receiving Communion during Mass was similar across both groups. All the overseas-born spoke with varying degrees of enthusiasm about the feeling being different when celebrating Mass with the faith-community in the homeland, whereas among the Australian-born two expressed a strong feeling of being part of the local faith-community.

Adaptations to the Mass
The women were questioned about adaptations in the Sunday Mass so that non-English speakers could share sometimes (Q.1.6).

The Overseas-born Response
These responses proved interesting - two with less English replied "yes" it would help but all the rest replied "no". Three remarked that there are more differences than just language i.e. the manner of celebration is different, and besides, if they so desire they pray in Arabic anyway. Two indicated the variety of languages needed, so how could choice be made? Another considered that each group needed its own whole Mass.

Asked whether they had made friends in the parish, three replied that they were friends only with their neighbours; only one claimed friends among Australians and other nationalities. Most had little contact with anyone beyond
the neighbours. The main social contacts appear to be their own "ethnic" community.

The Australian-born Response
Views on possible adaptations to Sunday Mass to allow greater language participation were evenly divided. Those who agreed commented that: a system of rotation would be necessary because of numbers, but people have a right to hear the Scripture in their own tongue; a good idea, but implementation would be difficult because of entrenched attitudes; one doubted that migrants want to "integrate" because she had tried very hard and long without success to induce them to join various things.

Those who disagreed did so because: English is the language of this country and if others were introduced then the "Australians" would miss out (two); and there are national language Masses (two). Added comments were that those who emigrate here should learn the language of this new country as would be the case if roles were reversed. One noted that the system had already been tried in the parish.

Regarding friendships with parishioners, this group mixed mainly with other parents at the school. All claimed to get on well with everyone, regardless of backgrounds. A couple had close friends of other nationalities but mainly, close friends were of similar background and interests.

Comparison
Overall, the overseas-born were slightly less in favour of language adaptation in the Mass not only because of the great language variety but also because it is only one aspect of difference. The Australian-born were evenly divided between those wanting to assist the non-Anglophone persons and those with strong feelings about English.
Friendships among the overseas-born are predominantly with their own people as they have very little other contacts although one is close friends with her neighbours, and one claimed friends among Australians and others. Two Australian-born women have close friends of other nationalities, otherwise they come from similar backgrounds and interests. All these claim to mix well at school.

Key Informants' Response
The key informants' responses concerning adaptations to Sunday Mass were all positive. The idea has been tried already at parish Masses and in Sacramental programmes (three) and currently work is being done on a new approach to involving persons from the different national backgrounds. One respondent mentioned the practical problem of parish and chaplaincy - which one is central for the immigrant, as many oscillate between the two? Some possible complexities would be: would there be competitiveness among the groups as to whose contribution was "best" or would such practices unite people? Existing longterm structures in the parish e.g. choirs, organists, lectors ... could prove difficult to change. Good social relationships would need to be established as a basis. One suggested having complete special language Masses for national feasts and to display charts, posters in church about ethnic groups/other rites so that these would feel part of the local scene.

Holy Communion
Finally in this section we look at what the women regard as the importance of Communion during their life since childhood (Q.3.5) and what they consider is its significance for the life of their child today (Q.4.8).
The Overseas-born Response

The responses of the overseas-born to what has been the significance of Communion for their life since childhood could be grouped loosely as: Communion brings her closer to God/Jesus (two) she feels really part of the Church community through this full participation in the Mass (three) the Sacraments bring a feeling of wholeness (one).

The significance of First Communion for their children today was answered from two viewpoints: half responded from the child's perspective and half from their own (the intended focus). This did not make a great deal of difference because the mother's view could be expected to be what she would envisage for her child. Indeed in four cases (including one of the latter) the responses reflected the mother's own experience. Half referred to full participation in the Mass and/or a sense of belonging (three); the child will be close to God which brings peace (one), it begins a new "life journey" of receiving the Eucharist (one), and she hopes the child will be a good Christian. One woman commented on the reference to "growing up in Australia" and remarked that, regarding the Sacraments, "the country is irrelevant".

The Australian-born Response

These answered similarly in that half saw the significance of Communion throughout life as a sense of belonging in the Church through participation in Communion (three) two referred to faith development through life in relation to Communion. For one, recalling her first Communion caused great nostalgia and emotion because of the memory of childhood innocence and hopes.

Additional comments elaborated the above: one recalls how she really wanted to receive Communion as a small child and the sense of belonging remained. Another attributed the significance of Communion to her on-going Catholic education and experience of Communion. Another saw her First
Communion as the beginning of an unfolding of faith that matured in her twenties and thirties and which she is actively trying to deepen now. Two women had spent some years away from the Sacraments but returned because they want their children to grow up in the Catholic faith.

With these women also there was some correlation between their own experience and what they considered significant for their children. Hopefully, the child will have a realization of and enjoy being a participating member of the Church (two). Communion for a Catholic "is the ultimate symbol of acknowledging Christ" (one). One hoped it would be a good memory. In addition some said their child will feel "grown up"; Communions later in life should be more significant as faith develops.

Comparison
Despite the different backgrounds, across both groups the attitudes to, and perceived significance of, Communion in their own lives and in the lives of their children were very similar. Both groups referred to the necessity of community for full participation in the Mass and a sense of belonging in the faith-community.

Slightly more of the overseas-born (3:2) saw the significance of Communion for the child as participation/belonging. Both groups referred to a "journey in faith" that develops through life, and spiritual Food on that journey.

Key Informants' Response
Concerning the significance of Communion for children today (Q.4.8) the key informants gave different responses yet again. Three thought it should be a joyous/festive occasion for them.

One spelled out that the significance of First Communion is missed because logically and pedagogically the order for receiving the Sacraments of Initiation should be Baptism, Confirmation, then Eucharist, because the Gospel
call to commitment to Jesus follows that pattern. Therefore the present practice misses the significance of Communion as an "overwhelmingly joyous" celebration of commitment to Christ, shared with the community. To alter the present system would necessitate much structural change.

Another claimed that the real significance of First Communion is lacking for most children because of the modelling given by parents. Since First Communion is meant to be the beginning of a deeper relationship with Christ, whereby one takes one's life to Christ and takes the Eucharist away to enliven that life, but for many the weekly Mass lacks that meaning, therefore the children miss that real significance. Moreover, many parents will not participate in the Sacraments; they send the child but will not model for it. Similarly another respondent added that First Communion is meant to begin a lifelong practice, not be a "sacred moment".

The event should be richer in symbolism and ritual with greater community responsibility and follow-up in the parish, asserted another. Further comments pointed out that the First Reconciliation and Eucharist for their children was, in many families, the parents' first contact with the Sacraments since their marriage. For migrants it is a big social occasion.

5.1.2.7 Expectations from the Homeland Experience
Both groups of women were asked about their own First Communion experience (Q.3.1-3.4). As much detail as possible was desired so as to build up as clear a picture as possible of the event-as-remembered. Time and experience may have coloured the memories but the general cultural background should be discernible. The aim was to compare the present and past events from the aspects of Church practice in different cultural settings and to try and identify the importance of cultural factors for the participants.
The Overseas-born Response

One woman had no memory of her own preparation at age seven except that "of course" her parents taught her to pray, and that she was prepared at school by a lay-teacher and priest.

Preparation for First Communion for the rest was given by Sister-teachers at school, and also the priest. For one, a priest gave all the instruction. There were explanations, memorization, singing, that lasted from several weeks or months, to about a year.

Most had positive memories of their feelings during the preparation: of feeling "good", "loving it", of knowing many prayers and chants, but one's dominant feeling was anticipation of the long, white dress. Their recollection of what seemed important then was that they would receive Communion and celebrate that (three) whereas two were concerned to get everything right and know what to do.

Their parents talked to them and taught them at home, especially how to pray. Two mentioned the influence of devout mothers. For their parents their First Communion was an important event (four). The average age was eight years, ranging from seven-nine years.

The Mass was celebrated by the Bishop, and in one case, assisted by the priest. All remembered sitting together with their class in the front of the church. One commented that girls sat one side, boys the other. The children received Communion together, except for one who went up with her parents. All recalled the flowers, decorations, and some, choirs (three), and white sheets covering their seats (two). Four had vivid and detailed memories of the occasion which they recounted with some emotion, and considerable animation. One recalled the experience "with real happiness" and that the whole village was present. Another remembered vividly walking in procession along the cobbled road from school to the church strewing flowers, then receiving a rosary from the priest at church. A similar recollection was of
processing from the hall to the church where the Bishop welcomed them with open arms before the altar. Another kept saying how beautiful everything had been for her.

Everyone had celebrated after the Mass at a meal/party which for one, was given by the nuns in the convent, but for the others in the school/church hall, for the children and their families or in one instance, everyone. Most received gifts from their family and some received a rosary, a Bible or holy picture at church.

Five women had clear memories of the day, especially of wearing the long, white dress. Two recalled the actual reception of Communion, because it was so important an occasion. The one who recalled strewing flowers along the road feeling very special, remarked that that must have been important to her as a child for the memory to remain so clearly. Another thought everything was so special because it was her first real experience of the Catholic faith. Recalled feelings were "happy", "excited", "special" with one being nervous while awaiting Communion.

The Australian-born Response

Three of these women admitted having very few memories of their First Communion although one remembered the "holiness and fervency" of it.

All were prepared by explanatory and catechism lessons given at school by Sister-teachers and in two cases with regular reviews from a priest. Two recalled having practice with an unconsecrated host. Most could not remember how long the preparation took but thought from several weeks to a couple of months (two).

Recalling their childhood feelings during the preparation, two remembered the anticipation. For one it was of an important event and for the other, a youngest child, it was to be able to join the rest of the family receiving Communion. Two had been excited: one about being a "special person" and
the other at the prospect of special clothes and a party. One had "learned a lot then". A variety of things seemed important: one felt she had to be "very good" so went to morning Mass for months beforehand; one felt the Consecration was sacred and awe-inspiring therefore Communion was also. For others the importance lay in being "special" and in dressing up and having a party.

For this group parental involvement in the preparation varied. Three had supportive mothers but only one was actively involved by listening to her catechism and praying the Rosary with her. For two, their fathers were supportive since for one, her mother was dead and the other mother was a devout Protestant. Half this group had only one Catholic parent. The average age was seven years, ranging from six-eight/nine years.

Two had "no memory" of their First Communion Mass and one recalled very little. One remembered a Bishop celebrated the Mass; for the others it was the priest (one knows because of a photo). All sat up the front of the Church with classmates. Three recalled the flowers, decorated church and choirs. One remembered it as a very beautiful Mass. The only recollection one had was of walking down the aisle with flower petals feeling important.

Four remembered a party for the children in the hall or classroom. Two received small gifts from their families. One remembered a very exciting day, "one of the best" of her life.

Their most vivid memory of the event also varied. One remembered the hymns during Mass but of being terrified lest the Host stick to the roof of her mouth and break, and of being happy when Communion was over. Another clearly recalled getting ready as the centre of the family's attention because it was her day so long awaited. That evening she did not want to take off the dress. One who was only six, was excited getting dressed at home but felt different from the others because she had no mother and besides, her dress was yellowish, not white like the others (it was a family dress, handed down from others). For one, the vivid memory was of having a great time at the party
because parties were very rare occurrences. The only memory another had was of having a photo taken.

**Comparison**

Generally the overseas-born had more vivid memories than the Australian-born. One of the former recalled but little whereas three of the latter retained hardly any memory at all.

Preparation for the overseas-born was done at school by Sister-teachers and/or the priest (except for one who had a lay-teacher) whereas only two of the Australian-born had any preparation from a priest. Generally the preparation was by explanation and memorization, plus for the overseas-born, singing, and practice with the host for the Australian-born. Time taken was not well-remembered and possibly ranged from several weeks to a year.

Three of the overseas-born remembered positive feelings during the preparation focusing on the Communion and getting everything right, but for one the focus was the dress. The Australian-born generally were less intent on the Communion and more inclined to the other aspects, e.g. the dress or the party.

All the overseas-born spoke of strong parental support which seemed to be part of their on-going home training. Their First Communion was important to their parents. Among the Australian-born, half had only one Catholic parent; two were supported only by a mother, two only by a father. Three mentioned Communion being important to their mothers because of their faith.

Overall the overseas-born were a little older; their average age was eight-years compared with seven-years for the Australian-born.

5.1.2.8 Family Preparations and Attitudes

The final focus was on the family. The women were asked what they considered was the most important thing that the family did for the child's
religious upbringing (Q.2.2a), what they themselves did (Q.2.3) and about their preparations for the forthcoming First Communion. (Q.4.1-4.7). The aim was to identify underlying cultural and religious elements.

The Overseas-born Response
All the overseas-born women replied that the family shares/practises the faith with the children, explains everything to them and prays with them. Two mentioned songs and stories as important - the folklore is religious and passed down from former generations.

Consequently their own contribution to the child's religious training was similar: that they live/practise the religion with their children, teach them, pray and sing with them and teach them to care for others.

As for the preparation for First Communion, one did not know what goes on at school. Generally, the women want their child to know and understand the event; that the child understands what Communion is (three), its relevance to the Catholic faith (one), is reverent (two); and two emphasized acquiring appropriate knowledge. One simply wanted her child to be "a good Christian".

Family assistance for the child was described as taking him/her to Mass and talking about it (four), using the school booklet (two), prayer each evening, and one said confession was a necessary preparation. Every woman said that the family was excited about or anticipating the important occasion.

Four thought that the child's preparation now was different to their own. Of these, three could not specify how it was different but one thought the reason was a different school in another country. At this point no one seemed familiar with what the school preparation entailed. The other woman quoted as a difference that here the child may receive Communion in the hand, whereas for the Maronites receiving on the tongue is considered more respectful. Two saw no difference and one of these seemed to be saying that she continued here as she would in the homeland.
How did they feel about the differences? The more recent-arrival was interested in the system here; one rejected any changes in the Church; another accepted changes but did not know much about them; and for one the religion remained the same regardless of different customs. No one had any clear ideas of reasons for the changes: perhaps changing times/changing Church? They felt the children were prepared differently at school but did not really know how or why.

What would they like in the future regarding First Communion? One could not comment yet. Two were happy with the present system. The other three preferred the old style with a special Mass for all the children to celebrate with their friends. Also, they needed longer preparation and to learn more reverent behaviour in Church. The implication was that the school was to do all this.

All were preparing traditional clothes for the children, white dress and veil for girls, suit and tie for boys. Five were happy about this because it was "special" for a special day but one commented that the child must know the reason for wearing the clothes. One woman was non-committal.

Every family planned a celebration. Most would be attended by extended family and friends at home, but two planned a meal out for only the immediate family for reasons of health or employment. Five commented that it was important to celebrate, "to share the happiness". One explained that at Baptism the child had been too young to celebrate but now sharing a meal has value and continues what Jesus did.

**The Australian-born Response**

The Australian-born views on the family's contribution to the religious upbringing of the child varied. Two mentioned love and support, with one adding spending time with them. Two spoke of the child experiencing being loved, therefore realizing it was loveable which reinforces its identity as a
loved child of God. One considered the family gave good example and taught respect for others. For the other, the family provided security, love, values, which include religion.

Five considered their own contribution as giving good example. Two added the comments that example was: by modelling relationships; for the other it was in the context of a good marriage and stable family life supported by a caring extended family. The remaining mother teaches her children "to be good".

From the preparation for First Communion the women wanted most that the child understand and/or appreciate the Sacrament (five) adding that it is "a gift/a privilege" to be part of a faith-community receiving the Eucharist (two), and that it is only the start of a "journey of understanding" the Eucharist as spiritual food without which life would be empty (one). One woman wanted her child to feel more a part of the Church, as she had done.

In additional comments two referred to the children's easy, relaxed attitude at school Masses, and apparent lack of reverence. One wondered whether this resulted from today's style of teaching. Two had queried their child's being sufficiently mature to understand the significance of the Eucharist. For one this meant that the child does nothing to prepare whereas she herself had risen very early for months to attend daily Mass before First Communion.

Four of the women were actively supported by their husbands in helping the child prepare, but two fathers would not do anything. Preparation included attending Mass, explaining it and using the school booklet (four) plus answering questions, discussing the event, family prayer and attending Reconciliation. One mother prayed with the child and encouraged it to make daily "sacrifices" in preparation. Another only answered questions and occasionally took the child to church.
All these women said they and the family were looking forward to/excited about the event.

For all this group the preparation given was different from what they had experienced. Three found the greatest change to be parental involvement, for their parents had not been involved; "the nuns did everything". One found the greatest change in the attitude to sin, therefore to Reconciliation which is now a good experience. For another the main difference was that today, children lack knowledge, particularly the basics of the Mass, and behaviour in church, all of which greatly displeased her. One did not know what the school preparation was.

No one had clear reasons for the changes. Suggestions were a changing Church, more relaxed attitudes to religion. One commented that parents, not the school, were responsible for the child's religious training which had to be supported by example.

For the future, two were happy with the new arrangements and two were definite about preferring the old ways. One thought First Communion should be much later, at about twelve-years and one woman made no comment.

Additional comments from those happy with the changes were that one wanted more consultation with parents but the other was happy to leave organization to the school. Both wanted some small common celebration afterwards e.g. a cup of tea in the hall. The one who wanted children to be older thought they ought to have more theological knowledge of the Eucharist, but a special Mass and clothes as usual to make it special.

An anecdote from one woman who approved the new style illustrated the problems which can arise therein, but also that attitudes have an element of choice. Some years ago an elder child was to receive First Communion with a couple of other children at a certain Sunday Mass. All arrived clad in white frocks and veils and sat with their families in full view of the priest near the front of the church. He ignored them totally, and preached on the evils of divorce! To
make matters worse, her Protestant relations had all come for the occasion. It
was "a total disaster". "Absolutely furious", she confronted the parish priest (he
had not officiated) about it. He was understanding, and arranged a Home
Mass for those children and their families, for which they again wore their
dresses, and felt somewhat compensated thereby. She remarked that
although she had good reason to reject the changes, she had not done so and
still preferred the new way.

All the girls would wear white dresses and veils (some borrowed)
except one child who chose not to wear a veil. Boys would wear white shirt
and dark trousers except one who was loaned a suit and tie. The mothers
were happy about this although one would have preferred that a standard of
dress be set down instead of parents being free to choose what they regard as
appropriate.

All intended to celebrate at home with family, godparents and relatives
plus close friends, by "a nice lunch".

Comparison
All the overseas-born women saw the family's contribution and their own to the
child's religious upbringing as sharing/practising their faith through prayer,
discussion, religious folklore. Australian-born replies were varied in both
cases, and expressed mainly in relational terms, e.g. for the family, "love and
support", "security" while the great majority saw their personal effort as "good
example".

Concerning the current preparation for First Communion, five of the
Australian-born wanted their child to understand/appreciate the Sacrament
whereas this was uppermost for three of the overseas-born. Two of the
overseas-born wanted the child to acquire knowledge, e.g. of prayers. One
woman in each group wanted her child to be "closer to the Church" or "a good
Christian".
Both groups assist similarly with the child's preparation, i.e. taking it to Mass, explanations ... . The main difference was that among the Australian-born two fathers would not be involved. In both groups one woman only attended Mass occasionally (for different reasons). All the families were going to celebrate the event.

All the Australian-born mothers found their child's preparation different to their own and could comment how, though not why. Although four overseas-women said it was different they could not specify how or why, nor did they know what was being taught at school. Of the two who saw no difference, it seemed to be in one case, that she was doing the same about it herself, as she had known. Half the Australian-born saw the difference as more parental involvement which they appreciated.

Regarding ideas for future celebration, three of the overseas-born preferred a return to the old style (one Mass, all children in white) whereas two were satisfied with the new way. Division of opinion existed also among the Australian-born. Two liked the modern way; two definitely did not; one wanted the children to be older and know more. In both groups one woman made no comment.

All the girls will wear traditional white dresses and veils except one girl who prefers no veil. All sons of overseas-born women will wear suit and tie but only one of the Australian-born's sons. Mothers were content with this except for one Australian-born who would prefer prescribed dress. Every family planned to celebrate the day.

Key Informants' Response
Variety again marked this group's responses. Asked what was the most important contribution that the family made to a child's religious upbringing (Q.2.2a), four replied good example, or teaches child to pray (two); child experiences love in a family environment (two).
A number of significant comments were added: the family models and reinforces good behaviour. Family prayer is increasing among Anglophone Australians mainly because of parental involvement in Scripture courses. Family prayer is more common among migrant families who usually have "a sacred space" in the home. Religious folklore is an aspect of their public spirituality. One respondent had experienced the religious influence of extended families: following a lesson on some saint, the children of migrant background returned next day with stories of saints that were special to grandparents/relations. This sparked off tremendous interest and enthusiasm with the whole class seeking information, exchanging booklets and pictures. What began as a minor lesson developed into a profitable class project by feedback from extended families.

There were also negative comments: one informant reported that most Anglophone Australians were "shy" about discussing religion or love in the home. Another noted a "devotional void" in most Anglophone Australian Catholic homes (i.e. no religious objects visible) which contrasted with those of the overseas-born. One respondent commented that many immigrant parents were over-protective of daughters before marriage, and that parents do not support the religious training of youth, e.g. parents who do not attend Sunday Mass nor special Masses for youth such as Antioch (which is a movement for young people). Finally, in many families today children are not in a loving, caring environment.

And what did the key informants want for the children from their preparation for First Communion? Most (five) wanted it to be an experience of God/Christ's personal love for them, shared in the faith-community, with one expressing this as understanding "the Eucharist as holy". Two hoped the day would be a memorable/joyful one for them. One wanted the children to understand the parish Eucharistic Meal in relation to their family meal as a symbol of solidarity. Another hoped the children would understand that the
Eucharist celebrated the life and death of Christ, and be reverent. One hoped the event would be significant for family life.

Concerning changes for future First Communions, one saw a need for a celebration later in the year for practical teaching reasons. The common element for everyone else was greater consultation with and participation of the parents (seven). Currently the organization is done by the school. Two respondents clearly delineated a different organization for sacramental programmes: for one, it would be totally parish-based, separated from the school, so that all children would receive the same preparation outside of school time. A group composed of the parish team, teachers, parents would be responsible for all aspects of the preparation for, and celebration of, the Sacraments. This would require big organizational changes in the parish, the education and training of parents and time for implementation. Promising present signs for the future were increasing parental involvement and increasing adult religious education. It was a long-term view anticipating that overseas-born parents would also be involved. The second plan was very similar except that it did not specify that the instruction of children would be totally outside of school time but saw a positive educational role for the Catholic school regarding parents and children.

Some difficulties concerning Sacramental programmes were the need to build "community" before that community could be responsible for such programmes. Another problem was that many parents' own faith was undeveloped hence they wanted for their children what they had experienced in the past. However, the children today need a maturer faith for tomorrow's world. Also, many parents, especially immigrants, leave all preparation to the school, are concerned that the child be "done", and do not see the Sacrament as anything beyond a one-time event. One person queried the effects of spreading the First Communions over six Masses because the celebratory effect was dissipated, and thought a common celebration might be better.
5.2 Data from Observation and Participant-observation

5.2.1 PARISH PREPARATION EVENTS

It was reported that parents had been involved in the celebration of First Reconciliation which had taken place at the end of last year. For some parents that had been their first sacramental experience for many years. This year's preparatory events were:

- the regular Parent-Teacher meeting for Grade Threes at the beginning of the year at school;
- a designated Sunday Mass which marked the official start of the preparation period. This was for all parents and children in the programme i.e. including children in state schools, and was followed by a meeting in the hall;
- a celebration of Reconciliation for parents and children during the week preceding the first of the three Communion Sundays;
- classroom lessons.

5.2.1.1 The Parent-Teacher Meeting

This was held in the evening in the classrooms and attended by the Principal, class teachers, a specialist teacher and fifty-eight parents.

In her welcoming address, the Principal emphasized the important educative role of parents with whom children spend most of their lives and from whom they acquire attitudes and religious and moral values.

One class teacher outlined and explained the content and methods used in teaching various subjects, including school policy and practice regarding homework and discipline. Parents received a parent handbook for *Let's Celebrate the Eucharist*, the religion text used in the classroom. The other teacher explained the major themes of the text and how parents could use it at home in conjunction with classroom lessons.
At Question Time one parent requested just one Mass "the way it was for us". Some debate for and against this proposal ensued, but the Principal indicated that the school followed parish policy that First Communions take place during Sunday Masses. Another woman, in favour of the present method, affirmed that her experience of it had been "marvellous".

Afterwards the teachers were available to the parents. The meeting had taken an hour. Later it was learned that the persons desirous of the old ways were of Lebanese background - that each year a small group wants to revert to the former way. The parent who praised the change was Australian-born.

5.2.1.2 The Preparatory Mass and Meeting

All parents and First Communion candidates were required to attend this special Sunday morning Mass. It was apparent that all had not complied, and moreover, some children seemed to be alone. Nevertheless, a block of parish school children and parents was obvious.

There was special focus on the children some of whom read prayers or brought up the Gospels and gifts, supervised by the teachers. The Sister-Catechist looked after the State school children. During the Mass the children sang appropriate, simple hymns.

In the brief introduction and in the homily the priest explained the significance of the Mass as beginning the children's preparation for First Communion which was a further step in their initiation into the Christian community.

After the homily the parents were invited to stand and read together a short pledge committing themselves to assist in preparing their child. Then the whole congregation renewed their Baptismal promises (which is a declaration of faith in, and commitment to, Christ and his teachings). This symbolized their responsibility for giving Christian example to the candidates.
It was observed that parishioners at the Mass would have been aware of its significance, although the congregation was very mixed in ethnic background and age. After morning tea in the hall there was a meeting for parents while children had their sessions in the classrooms.

Addressing the parents the parish priest emphasized parental responsibility for teaching the child about the Mass by example. He explained the post-conciliar approach to the Sacraments and the meaning of the changes in the administration of First Reconciliation and First Communion. Parents' nostalgic memories must not prevent their child from being equipped for life today and in the future. Parents were given a copy of an article explaining the new approach called "Introducing Children to the Eucharist" by Peter Conroy in *Annals '81*, (July 1981).

The meeting concluded with a short audio-visual reflection. Later it was learned that most of the Lebanese families who were to be visited had not attended, but all the Australian-born had.

### 5.2.1.3 Celebration of Reconciliation

The Second Rite of Reconciliation is a communal celebration consisting of Scripture Readings, homily, various prayers on an appropriate theme, followed by an opportunity for personal confession and concludes with a communal thanksgiving. Again the teachers and Catechist participated and supervised the children's various roles. Six priests assisted.

By now most of the interviews were completed and it was possible to recognize the women concerned. All the Australian-born women attended and a few of the overseas-born. Copies of the service were available and were written in simplified language appropriate for eight year-olds. Children led the prayers and songs and a group read in parts a simple version of the Gospel story of Jesus' meeting with Zacchaeus.
During the personal confessions two priests were seated at opposite ends of the sanctuary, therefore visible to all. It was observed that the children seemed totally at ease, and enjoy their chat with the priest. Others used the private rooms along the sides of the Church. At this time quiet music was played and appropriate pictures projected onto the screen. The children generally relaxed and chatted with family or friends. The service ended with a lively, joyful hymn.

5.2.1.4 Classroom Lessons

In the classroom during observed lessons the children sat on the floor grouped near the teacher. One class had a review lesson during which they acted out a family celebration of a birthday party. The children began with a known experience of celebration and were led to see the religious ritual of the Mass as a present celebration of an important past event. The other class acted out a part of the Mass with discussion, then read in parts the relevant section of the text. Both classes concluded this section with a moment of prayer then settled to written activities at their desks.

The children were involved and seemed to understand the points made during the lessons which were at their level of understanding.

On the second visit the classes combined for practice in church. Appropriate behaviour and their participatory roles in the Communion Masses were explained and practised. To the observer they seemed as relaxed and casual in church as in the classroom. A few seemed less mature and inclined to be disruptive. For today's audio-visual generation, quiet composure seemed a short-term condition. It was obvious what some respondents had meant about the children's "lack of reverence" in church.
5.2.2 THE FIRST COMMUNION MASSES

Since there were six Masses spread over three Sundays, to assess the experiences as a whole, they are discussed together from various aspects, although each was different to some extent. Each Mass had at least one of the interviewees present with her child.

The church is fairly large with three doors across the front, but a side door close by the sanctuary proved the popular entry for late-comers, especially the "photographers". Special decorations remained in the church over the three Sundays and consisted of a long, red and white wall hanging featuring children's Communion and a matching one hanging in the front of the altar whereon the children's names were displayed. There were the usual floral decorations around the sanctuary.

Hymns and prayers for the children's participation were the same each Sunday. Words for the hymns were projected onto a screen visible to all. Many children were involved in the prayers or in the processions (bringing the Gospels and the gifts of bread and wine). The central prayer, the Canon, was one for children's Masses with responses at regular intervals throughout what is otherwise a lengthy priestly prayer. The children who had a short prayer to read had practised these, but some become confused when their time came, especially when one celebrant continued with the regular introductory prayers instead of those prepared for the children's participation. That little group had to be rescued from the lectern where they stood in obvious bewilderment. On the other hand, one priest added to the children's roles. For this Mass there were about twenty first-communicants. He summoned them into the sanctuary during the homily which he addressed to them, discussing the Scripture readings with them then summing it all up in relation to their First Communion. Later he called them again to send them out among the congregation at the Sign of Peace. The people seemed to appreciate this and spoke personally to the children as they passed.
The first-communicants and their families sat towards the front of the church for easy access at Communion time. Some of the parents did the Scripture readings. At the preparatory meetings parents had been told about accompanying their child for its First Communion, which symbolizes their responsibility for bringing up the child in its religion. At some Masses the priest invited them to do so, at others nothing was said. Actual practice varied, sometimes one parent or both accompanied the child, while other children went up alone.

Each Mass was offered by one of four priests so each varied somewhat according to the personality and outlook of the celebrant. Besides the First Communions, these three Sundays each had another major focus - Mother's Day, the quarterly Charitable Works Fund Appeal and Pentecost - which meant that the introductory words and the homily were divided. At times the First Communion received the lesser emphasis.

Towards the end of Mass each child was to receive a certificate. The first group was called by name. They stood in the sanctuary with their certificates and were duly acclaimed by the congregation before the final prayers and blessing (i.e. during Mass), then walked out in procession with the priest. This was a significant action which helped them feel welcomed, that they belonged to and were valued by the community. At the next Mass the children were called up after the final blessing (i.e. after Mass) when already, people were moving away - as was observed by one tiny girl who stood on the seat, surveyed the situation around the church and announced in a clear voice: "But all the people are going O-U-T!" These communicants simply returned to their seats in an emptying church. Some observed later that it was a pity that they missed the warmth of community appreciation and support shown to the first group. That oversight was remedied at subsequent Masses.

"Appropriate dress" resulted in considerable diversity. Some girls wore a pretty street frock; others did not appear to be in anything special. There
were girls in simple, short, white frocks with ribbons or flowers in their hair, others wore veils. A few girls of Dutch and German background wore long, white dresses and a wreath of flowers on their heads. Many wore long, white frocks and veils, complete with gloves and a little bag suspended from the wrist. These dresses were very beautiful, often made from heavily embroidered material, lace and ribbons and must have been quite expensive. One small girl wore make-up, expety applied. All the girls of Lebanese background wore traditional clothes. Many boys wore suits in white, grey or black and bow-tie. Some had frilled shirts, most a plain one. One lad looked very smart in a creamish-coloured "track suit". Others wore white shirt and dark trousers. Most of the parents had "dressed" for the occasion. One overseas-born mother wore an all-white outfit.

For many the important element seemed to be to record it on film. People arrived late in what appeared to be groups of relations apparently not so much to attend Mass as to "see" the First Communions. They crowded in by the side door and packed that area of the Church, many armed with cameras. At every Mass there was the occasional flash of cameras photographing a child reading its piece, but at other times the children faced a barrage of cameras reminiscent of a media event, especially at Communion. People stood in the pews, in the aisles, even near the priest, to get close-ups of their relative's First Communion, thus effectively blocking the passage of all communicants and causing great confusion. Children were observed being waylaid to smile for the camera straight after receiving Communion or on the way back to their seats. The most intrusive photographer was the video operator who, early in the Mass organized his family members in turn on the front seat for his movie, then stood out in the front not far from the altar and filmed the whole congregation during the most solemn part of the Mass. All this aroused critical comment later from many parents, both of migrant background
and Australian-born. The latter were particularly incensed by the video-operator whom some said was a relative of a family of Lebanese background.

Many people took photographs outside afterwards, and talked in groups, whereas others left quickly.

The Principal and teachers concerned with Grade Three attended every Mass, welcomed families and supervised children's activities. The Sister-Catechist did likewise for the State school children. Afterwards they mingled with the families until they left.

Contact was made, albeit briefly in some cases, with all but two of the respondents. Those two overseas-born women hurried out of their Masses, but the researcher, caught up in the exodus, emerged to find they had gone already. The other women showed a range of emotions from quiet happiness to high excitement. A few looked weary and said that they had been up very early preparing for the meal and getting ready for Mass. Those with babies found it more difficult. The overseas-born women all remarked on it being an important day. They did not delay after Mass whereas a number of Australian-born lingered over taking photographs and conversing with friends, before leaving for the home celebrations. The children who were contacted seemed happy but had little to say. The morning tea planned by a group was cancelled because they could not cope with the extra work entailed.

5.2.3 EVALUATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMUNION EXPERIENCE

5.2.3.1 The Children

Two days after the last Communion Sunday a brief visit was made to the combined Grade Three classes. The children's comments showed that they had had a good experience at their First Communion.

Some spoke about the actual Communion experience, others wanted to discuss their party. The girls commented favourably on their white dresses
which they enjoyed wearing. One boy complained emphatically about the clothes he had to wear which he "hated" but his mother wanted.

One child had a celebration in a hall where everyone waited till she had entered before beginning the dancing, which apparently impressed her. Many children of migrant background received very expensive gifts e.g. a BMX bike, a remote controlled car, a coloured television, large amounts of money. The children of the Australian-born mothers received less expensive items such as rosaries, Bibles, books.

5.2.3.2 Overseas-born Women

The interpreter made the arrangements by telephone for an evaluation meeting with the overseas-born mothers two days after the last Mass. Although their responses had been positive, only one actually turned up, but she seemed happy to have come. The other evaluations (see Appendix IV) were completed by telephone by the interpreter or the researcher.

All the women said that they and their children enjoyed the Mass but a couple commented that their child missed friends whose families chose other Masses.

Only half the mothers took their child to receive Communion mainly because they had not been "to Confession" first so would not receive Communion themselves. This applied to the fathers as well, although one was taking photographs.

The women all liked the Mass, particularly the children taking active parts, and the special hymns. One was pleased to see the teachers were present.

The main factor which displeased five of these women was that there was not a single Mass with all the children sitting together up the front with their friends. Even two who had not expressed this view during the interviews, did so now. They repeated this when asked about additional comments. One
woman remained quite happy with the whole manner of the celebration, as she had been earlier. Her immediate family accompanied the child to Communion and found the whole liturgy very good.

It was a memorable day for their children because they had received their First Communion. Some mentioned that their child had been looking forward to this. One child had attended all the Masses where her friends had been first-communicants which the mother seemed to have found a great effort to please her child. Most of the children had celebrated with a party attended by the extended family and received gifts e.g. clothes, money. A couple of families went out for a special lunch.

One woman was quite annoyed by the cameras and video and suggested having an official photographer so that everyone would have a picture but the Mass would not be disturbed, and would be more respectful. Another was disappointed at not having the "special photo" i.e. of her child receiving Communion and felt this was a sad defect. This woman did not see any "disrespect" about photographing the actual Communions and said such is done in Lebanon so as to have a souvenir of the event.

5.2.3.3 The Australian-born Women

A meeting to evaluate the First Communion experiences was organized shortly afterwards but only two women could attend, because of illness or employment. Nonetheless, there was a lively discussion. The others were contacted by telephone and responded to the same questions (see Appendix IV). All but one of these women had participated in the last of the Communion Masses, so their comments had the same focus.

Everyone affirmed that the First Communion Mass was a good experience for their child who had had a happy day. Comments expanded this: their Mass had had more active roles for the children than had the others. One mother, previously favoured the old style but changed completely after the
experience and was quite euphoric. It was "Wonderful! Much better than anticipated!". Another dissented, feeling disappointed about the extra "fuss" because ideally she would prefer a normal Mass.

All but one had presented the child with her husband for First Communion. The one who refrained gave no reason other than that the child went with friends. Remarks were significant: one felt the action showed parental responsibility for the child's faith. Another, mentioned above as converted to the modern way, realized through the experience why changes were made.

Generally everyone was pleased with the liturgy. Those who had favoured the "old way" were among those who liked the children's being together in the sanctuary and taking the Sign of Peace to the congregation. A particular favourite was the updated version of an old First Communion hymn, during which three admitted they shed tears. On the other hand one remarked that parishioners did not know the words. (Actually all words were shown on the screen and were the same over three Sundays).

Did anything displease them? There was a vehement denunciation of the use of video machines and cameras during Mass, particularly at Communion time. Two families who had sat far enough away were not overly disturbed but the rest were angry about the conduct of photographers, especially the video operator, who dominated the front aisle and caused "chaos" at Communion time. Photographers had stood in pews and aisles obstructing the view of those behind them.

There were practical suggestions e.g. that the ushers control the circulation of people during Mass; that better seating arrangements be made; that an official photographer take a group photo.

The family celebrations went well. Most of the children had been anticipating First Communion with their family and had achieved that goal which was the "focal point of the day". Many mothers thought that Mass will
now be more meaningful to them. Celebrating the event with the family, godparents and relations was important. One mother considered that family preparation and support all along helped make the day itself so memorable for the child.

Did they have any additional comments? Most spoke of the emotional pressures they experienced because of preparations for the event, i.e. cleaning the house and garden and preparing the clothes. Then on the day, they were "tense", "nervous", "sick with worry", over the family meal and getting the family to the church on time. Above all they wanted the child to be "peaceful" for the First Communion. They said that this was the experience of women generally, across all cultures. Apparently a group composed of many nationalities had formed spontaneously in the playground the day before and this experience of tension had been universal. A few of the interviewees were among that group.

Some mothers also had to cope with the older or younger children's resentment or jealousy over the attention being accorded to the first-communicant. This was an added emotional stress for the mother.

For most the financial aspect was a problem since clothes, and even modest gifts, are expensive. Could they suggest ways of minimizing these strains for mothers? One longed for "the good old days when the nuns did everything"! Although a large group of various backgrounds had wanted a morning tea after the last Communion Mass, when questioned about it the women replied that they could not take on any extra responsibilities and work that day, so the idea had been abandoned.

Someone at that spontaneous "meeting" mentioned above had suggested that a written summary be given to the Principal. Since their opinions corroborate many of those of the research group and demonstrate that many views are widespread among the mothers, a resume of their main points follows:
- Most were happy with the services but suggested improvements: That First Communion be more of "an occasion", although they did not suggest how to achieve this.
- Most wanted a single Mass or at least fewer Masses with larger groups of children who would enter in procession and sit in the front seats.
- There was strong feeling that the children needed more practice of their roles in the Mass.
- A committee of parents could plan the liturgy, so long as it was not themselves!
- Parents should be advised on appropriate gifts for children e.g. Barbi Dolls, videos and such like are not suitable.
- There was strong feeling that video cameras should be "BANNED" and side doors closed during Mass.

5.3 Perspectives on First Holy Communion

5.3.1 THE CHURCH'S PERSPECTIVE

The following was compiled from information gathered during interviews and observed meetings and sacramental celebrations.

First Communion is a person's initial participation in the Eucharist (the Mass) and is a step in the process of initiation into the Catholic community. Hence it has significant personal and communal importance.

After a lengthy preparation, adults were received into the Early Church during the celebration of Christ's resurrection on Easter Saturday night. Candidates were baptized by immersion, then, clad in a new white garment and carrying a lighted candle (symbols of rebirth into Christ's life) they entered the church in procession to be confirmed by the Bishop before the altar, where they participated in the community celebration of the Eucharist as full-fledged Christians.
Later, infant baptism became the norm. In the Latin rite Confirmation and the Eucharist were delayed for some years so that the original initiation rites were seen as separate sacraments. Early this century First Communion for children became customary at around age seven.

The Second Vatican Council authorized the reform of the liturgy in those elements which are changeable and needed updating and adaptation (Sacred Liturgy #21, Abbott, W. ed. 1966:146). The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults was revived, but for children, the custom continues of infant baptism, Eucharist some time after age seven, followed later by Confirmation.

The Council also reasserted that all sacraments are ecclesial celebrations not private devotions (Sacred Liturgy #26, Abbott, W. ed. 1966:147). Now therefore, the official view is that First Communion is a significant step in the child's Christian initiation and the local parish community celebrates the incorporation of new members into its communion. The parish, not the child, is the main focus.

Accordingly, for some years this parish has promoted First Communion as a parish celebration, taking place at regular Sunday Masses. This is seen in context of the real world wherein children have to live their faith today and tomorrow - a different world from that in which their parents grew up. Parish and school policy is for greater parental involvement in, and responsibility for, the child's religious education.

5.3.2 THE MOTHERS' PERSPECTIVES
Predictably, since all were Catholics, the women's attitudes to basic faith questions were similar: the Mass was the central act of worship; the significance of Holy Communion for themselves and their children generally were comparable; most wanted their child to know and understand something of the importance of receiving Communion in this Christian community. All considered First Holy Communion "an important occasion" and a "special day"
for the child. For most respondents there seemed no distinction between these, e.g. responses spoke of the child's first full participation in the Mass, and of receiving Christ.

That importance can be specified under personal and communal aspects but in practice these coalesce, especially for the migrant women. In their original homeland experience they reported that the whole community was responsible for example to the young and everyone celebrated Mass together - for special events this was a moving experience described by one as "overwhelming".

All the women had made their own First Communion at one special Mass with their classmates. In white dresses and veils they had sat in the front of a decorated church feeling very "special" and celebrated at a party afterwards. Evidently, for the overseas-born this had been memorable indeed, since five out of six did remember it, some vividly, whereas only three of the Australian-born had any recollection of it.

Each mother wanted the First Communion to be memorable for her child. The context each saw as necessary to achieve that varied from the Australian-born woman who preferred no "extra fuss", just the family presenting the child at their normal Sunday Mass, to those who felt the occasion demanded greater emphasis by a special Mass with all the children together.

This latter view was very strong among the overseas-born after the event, whereas among the Australian-born there was a complete range of opinions.
CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY AND COMMENT

This chapter will summarize and comment on the research results.

6.1 Background Information

Although only half the overseas-born women grew up in urban situations, all the Australian-born did. Educational backgrounds were approximately similar. The overseas-born women migrated directly to Australia. Most of the Australian-born had travelled overseas. The average age of the overseas-born was 6.7 years younger than that of the Australian-born and the age at which their first child was born was correspondingly younger. Most of the overseas-born had one child more than most of the Australian-born. Apart from one more-recent overseas-born arrival, the average length of residence in the parish for both groups was about ten years. Actually the overseas-born were a little more stable than the Australian-born.

In the light of the later responses, it is interesting that apparently overseas travel and/or work experience did not appear to make any difference to the religious attitudes of the Australian-born women. Advocates of the "traditional" First Communion ceremonies were divided equally among those who had travelled overseas and those who had not. Nor was there any difference in attitude on the questions concerning cultural diversity.

Most of the overseas-born women migrated in the 1970s when people fled the civil strife in Lebanon (Storer, D. ed. 1985:174). The most recent arrival was the only one to have come with an established family unit and school-age children.

One woman, employed for several years after arrival, specified that she had worked in a Lebanese-owned business. This agrees with economic-welfare aspects of the Lebanese extended family structure mentioned by Hassan, R. et al. (1985:180-181), likewise aspects of the "self-contained
community" referred to by White, P. 1986 (CHOI IV No.492). The kind of employment taken by the migrant women (factory and domestic work) reflects that of many non-English-speaking women (Storer, D. 1985:10). Although at the time of the research, most now spoke good English, lack of language would have been an impediment on arrival.

6.2 Social Change and Its Influence

Although "the family" takes a variety of forms in modern society, (see Population Report No.8, 1987:2) most women in both groups and almost all key informants, named the family as the most helpful social influence for rearing children religiously. This is not surprising since both cultures have a tradition of regard for the nuclear/extended family and the Catholic Church considers the father-mother-child unit as "the first and vital cell of society" (Abbott, W. ed. 1966:502-3). This basic value underlies both cultures. Yet key informants indicated that, today, many families do little or nothing for the religious training of children. All the women interviewed had concern for their child's religious upbringing and appeared to be in stable situations, including one Australian-born "solo parent". In the light of key informants' views, these women would be rather exceptional on both scores.

Almost all of the overseas-born women said it would be different were they rearing their children in the mother country because there family religious training was supported by community example, as the community felt responsible for its young members. When questioned if this differed in the cities, respondents denied this, saying that everyone lived in areas of their own religion e.g. Christian, Muslim, so the community had one mind on religious matters. This agrees with Drury's observations that each religion has its own sector and systems (Drury S. 1981:38 also Hassan, R. et al. 1985:173-4 and Ata, A. 1988:270). This mono-religious social background appears to be
one of the most pronounced cultural differences between the overseas and Australian-born women's early life.

Similar responses from both groups to perceived evil effects of the media on children reflect the popular view of the pervasiveness of media influence. They expressed frustration at being unable to control what amounted to the commercial world's exploitation of children as a prime profit-making advertising resource. The evil effects of peer pressure, especially from children who lack home training and supervision also concerned some mothers in both groups. The key informants' broader analysis of social evils affecting childrens' religious upbringing reflects their professional and religious training, more general knowledge of, and wider concern for, the parish, and indeed, society. The diversity of their replies also reflects the variety of opinion found today among Catholics, due to changes in society and the Church since the 1960s (see Collins, P. 1986:3-12; Leavey, C. 1980:41-42).

6.3 The General Community

By both groups of women and the key informants, the general social milieu, "the community", was considered no help for rearing children religiously. For half the overseas-born, "the community" meant their ethnic community which was supportive. But not all migrants experience ethnic and/or extended family support. In a study of community networks in Blacktown and Campbelltown, Morrissey et al. found that of the 1,104 persons interviewed only seventy-eight came from three-generational families (Morrissey, M. et al. 1986:127). Official policy of avoiding concentrations of any one ethnic group in public housing in those areas has meant that for many migrants, their support system, if it exists, is now outside their area of residence. Moreover, the possibility of developing support networks is lessened by the high turnover in rented accommodation and the small numbers of any one non-Anglophone group (Morrissey, M. et al. 1986:117).
Several women voiced fears concerning the moral and physical safety of their children in today's society, and did not allow them out alone.

6.4 Multi-ethnic Society and Culturally-diverse Church

Although slightly more Australian-born women affirmed that the culturally-diverse society was beneficial for rearing children religiously, an analysis of the responses shows that the overseas-born had somewhat firmer religious aspirations for their children's future. Since religion is an identifying feature of Lebanese communities (Drury S. 1981:34ff and Ata, A. 1988:270), this is not unexpected. Benefits of tolerance and acceptance of, and by, others were hoped for by both groups. Despite sharing a common faith and concerns for their children, the immigrant women have been slow to form relationships with women of other "ethnic" groups. Their main social contacts were with the extended family. Most key informants affirmed the value of cultural diversity although two indicated it posed problems in catechetics.

Before the immigrant influx Australian society and the Church were largely mono-cultural. One Australian-born woman was in her thirties before she heard of other rites in the Catholic Church. As recently as 1986, Collins assessed the general Australian Catholic's vision of the Church as tending to be narrow and "uncatholic" (Collins, P. 1986:180). Nevertheless, the general desire for greater knowledge and understanding of other rites and cultures expressed by the women and the positive attitude of key informants were hopeful signs for the future.

All the Australian-born and half the overseas-born women reportedly had "no problems" in sharing religious events such as First Communion, beyond language and cultural differences. These responses need to be considered in the light of actual involvement in parish events. Later responses (see No.6.6) showed that none of the overseas-born and half of the Australian-born were involved in parish groups. Therefore these responses would seem to show an
openness to sharing rather than active practice at this time. Unsolicited evidence of this openness came during the interviews from a number of women, mainly Australian-born, who were planning a simple morning tea after the last Communion Mass, which was being attended by a number of families of various cultural backgrounds, who all felt that there should be some common celebration for the children before they all dispersed for family celebrations.

Key informants searched deeper into the "sharing" issue, pointing to language limitations plus differences in education and levels of faith development across culturally-diverse expressions of the same basic faith, which can appear very different. As Hally (1986) noted, "symbolic expressions drawn from diverse cultures" can be divisive within a common faith (p31). One woman's "painful" experience of trying to explain her tradition seems to point to a) in the present, the necessity of empathetic listening to the other's point of view and expectations regardless of cultural or personality differences; and b) in the longterm, some needed ecclesial structure whereby religious traditions can be discussed and concrete plans make for genuine sharing at the local level so that "enrichment" can come about. This would require a basis of trustful, respectful relationships.

According to the key informants much has already been done towards bringing people together socially from various ethnic groups. A new initiative was currently in progress by the parish team. Building up relationships was considered the necessary social basis for any Christian community sharing religious events such as First Communion. Considerable effort had been expended also by the school staff among whom was a liason person of Lebanese background, and a person on a special CEO Religious Education and Multicultural Project which will result in a new Religious Education Curriculum formulated after study of the community's cultural and religious traditions and greater interaction between teachers and parents. These two
conducted a workshop this year with a group of migrant chaplains who discussed cultural backgrounds of religious practice. This type of initiative could be expected to do much for promoting understanding and co-operation between various national groups and rites of which the Catholic Church is composed.

Also, in this regard a useful approach would be that suggested by Kalantzis and Cope in their research for the Social Literacy Project (e.g. Kalantzis, M. and Cope, B. 1980:38ff). This would entail members of various ethnic groups meeting to share what they hold in common as a basis from which to explore how differences developed and then to plan how to build a future together. Such a method could be developed together with the basic Christian community structure that evolved in Latin America (referred to in 3.2.3), and be a means of addressing issues pertinent to the participants, issues that arise from cultural diversity, and so work towards the unity to which the Church aspires and of which it is a sign (*Lumen Gentium* #1).

6.5 The Parish School

Basically all the women chose the parish school because of their own faith and desire that their children be educated in that faith. They saw the school's role mainly as providing Christian education. The key informants emphasized its example and practice of Christian community and relationships and of the Church's catholicity. Several stressed that they referred to this parish school and had severe criticism of the apparent lack of faith of some teachers elsewhere in the Catholic system.

Up to half the mothers in both groups had serious reservations about the religious education received at school; the main complaint being that it was short on necessary knowledge. Later they were questioned specifically about preparation for First Communion (see No.5.1.2.8). Here it transpired that most of the overseas-born did not know what was taught at school nor how. If this
were considered in conjunction with the fact that very few of these women attended the Sunday preparatory sessions and explanations (reported in 5.2.1.2) this is not surprising. Merchant (1987) noted that Lebanese tend to leave teaching to the school without being involved in sacramental programmes (p28). On the other hand almost all the Australian-born did attend preparatory meetings, were enthusiastic about parental involvement, but unclear about changes in First Communion procedures and reasons for them. Perhaps the emotional connotations blocked perceptions? Or maybe the evidence is suggesting that new approaches need to be tried in relating to parents. In other words, "talking to" them does not seem very effective.

From information received from key informants it was revealed that efforts are being made to bridge the gap between parental expectations and the school's teaching of religion according to modern principles. Recently, the school began sessions for parents wherein they experienced a religion lesson exactly as their child did at school, including self expression in various media e.g. clay. Parents found it an enlightening experience. Further sessions were planned.

From the above data it could be said that the parish-school personnel are trying to build, from people of diverse backgrounds, a "closer" community of faith more akin to those from which many have come. The key informants considered that this school gave children a lived example of Christian community and relationships and assisted children of various cultural backgrounds to form such a community among themselves modelled on Christian values.

6.6 Parish and Priests
Opinions on the parish's contribution to children's religious upbringing were varied. The overseas-born women were negative, the Australian-born more positive and key informants were divided.
The women's involvement would seem to reflect the migrant position in that the same percentage of Australian-born are active in parish groups as was the case for the overseas-born in the original homeland. It could be suggested that until adequate inter-personal relationships are built up, migrant women will remain uninvolved in local Church activities. In addition, language and cultural differences draw people to their own language Churches, thus making it difficult to build "parish community" across ethnic groups.

Contact with priests was rare in both groups. Generally the evidence was that for the overseas-born who are well-established and fluent in English, there is no great difference in their attitude to, and contact with, Australian priests compared with those of the Australian-born.

6.7 Mass and Holy Communion

All the women claimed to enjoy Mass. Half the overseas-born now preferred the local parish Mass. These were fluent in English and said their children understood English better than Arabic. Language and preference for the old ritual were the reasons the others preferred their own language Mass. Some women described eloquently the more intense emotional impact in the original homeland, of being with one's own community for Mass - how the feeling was so different. Initially the change would have been very significant for them coming from close-knit communities, whereas here they became part of a multi-ethnic Church celebrating in the Latin rite. Even so, the women all identified as Catholic (one as Maronite Catholic) had entrusted their children to the parish school, and several remarked during the interviews that faith/sacraments were the same regardless of nationality. These aspects of the research were similar to the findings of Pittarello (1980) and Ravalico (1987) that immigrants had identified with the local Catholic Church although on deeper questioning they found the emotional aspects of religious ceremonies quite different.
Interestingly, most of the overseas-born did not favour changes to the Sunday Masses to include other languages besides English, mainly for practical reasons. Moreover, they asserted that language was only one among many factors affecting participation. The Australian-born were evenly divided on this. The key informants were very positive about greater involvement in the Mass for different peoples and were trying new ways of achieving it.

Concerning the meaning of Holy Communion: for both groups of women there was some correlation between what they saw as its meaning for their own lives and what was significant for their child. Again, the key informants' responses gave some deeper analyses: e.g. the real significance of Communion was missed, firstly because current pastoral practice administers the sacraments of initiation in illogical order, but to reverse the order of receiving Communion and Confirmation would be difficult. Another saw the real meaning in spiritual rather than liturgical terms, i.e. at Mass one is supposed to commit one's life to Christ and by Communion take Christ back to one's life. But many parents fail to model this, in fact, many refuse to model anything. They noted that it is not that such maturity can be expected of eight year-olds, but the attitude that parents model for them, of either free and loving worship or of a grudging duty to be done, is important.

None of the women interviewed referred to the deeper spiritual aspect of the Eucharist. Most would have responded from the teaching they themselves received before First Communion. A couple in each group referred to the child's growth or maturity. As key informants noted, on-going adult religious education is necessary.
6.8 Expectations from the Homeland Experience

On the whole there was considerable similarity in the mothers' own First Communion experiences, remembered vividly by five of the overseas-born but by three of the Australian-born.

All were prepared at school, almost all had Sister-teachers. The memory of the event was of being dressed in white, processing together with the class into a specially decorated church, sitting together up the front for Mass at which a number recalled the singing, and celebrating at a party afterwards. Half the overseas-born and a third of the Australian-born wanted that experience for their children. Behind each vivid memory of their own First Communion was a strong emotional experience i.e. recollections of feeling "excited", "important", and supported by the family. For the overseas-born this was enhanced by strong community support as well. Many commented on it being a happy, important occasion. On this evidence, for the event to be memorable for the child it needs be thoroughly joyous, rich in audio-visual aspects (singing, decorations, special clothes), being involved (strewing flowers was vividly recalled) and for the child to feel valued and important not only in the family but also in the faith-community.

The greater combination of these elements was found with the overseas-born group which could explain their stronger memories. Most also expressed their recollections with more intense emotion during the interviews.

6.9 Family Preparations and Attitudes

The overseas-born women considered the family's and their own contribution to the child's religious upbringing in terms of their traditional family religious praxis: The Australian-born women spoke in relational terms, as did the key informants also. These latter added that migrant families often have a strong tradition of family prayer and a "sacred place" in the home in contrast to the "devotional void" in many Anglophone Australian Catholic homes today.
Both groups were preparing similarly for First Communion. Most women considered the preparation given at school to be different to what they had received. While the Australian-born could specify areas of difference generally they lacked understanding of the reasons for them. The overseas-born said it was different but did not know how or why. This point was discussed earlier in relation to the school.

On the whole both groups wanted the child to know and appreciate what Communion is. Two in each group wanted children to be trained in reverent behaviour in church. Key informants wanted the children to experience Christ's personal love for them, shared in the faith-community, also that they have a happy experience and some understanding of the event.

A difference in family preparation was that two of the Australian-born women had no support from the father except that he would attend Mass when necessary. In their own childhood half this group had had only one Catholic parent. On the whole, the Australian-born group's background could be regarded as apparently less cohesively Catholic than that of the overseas-born, reflecting the different socio-religious environments.

For the future, opinion was divided in both groups concerning how to celebrate the First Communion, ranging from acceptance of the new to desire for the old style. The great majority of key informants wanted greater consultation with, and participation by, parents in the preparation for, and organization of, First Communion. Some wanted parish-based programmes instead of the present school-based organizational system. Perceived needs to implement this were for on-going adult religious education programmes for parents, some of whom were seen to need evangelizing before catechesis. There was also the need to "build community" before the community could feel responsible for implementing programmes.
6.10 Observations and Participant-observations

From observation of meetings and participant-observation of sacramental celebrations connected with the First Communions, it was learnt that the meanings and procedures of the celebration were explained to parents. Information gathered during the research showed that most of the overseas-born had not attended all the preparatory sessions and even among the Australian-born who had been present, a lot was "missed". Given that most had small children to watch, others were listening to a second language and many had strong emotional attitudes to First Communion, the results are not surprising. But it does give evidence for the suggestion that another system of communicating with parents, and particularly those of non-English-speaking background, would be beneficial.

All the mothers claimed that they and their children enjoyed the First Communion Mass and had a great day with the extended family.

Among the overseas-born mothers only one remained consistently happy with present parish First Communion celebration. The remaining five all said after the event that they would have preferred one Mass with all the children sitting together. Viewed against their own memories of a general community celebrating First Communion as a very significant occasion, the current dispersion of First Communions over several weeks and separate Masses could appear much less impressive. They addressed the child's perspective: it was his/her special day, (s)he wanted to share it with friends. They were pleased with the children's participation. Strong opinions were expressed both for and against taking photographs during the Mass.

The Australian-born mothers' views were more diverse. One was totally converted by the experience of the new way. In this group the strongest emotions were directed against the use of cameras and videos during Mass, and considerable anger was expressed against the disruption and lack of reverence caused by such activities. As to the celebration, opinions ranged
from one who still preferred the "old style" through to one who preferred "no fuss" at all.

Some interesting additional data was gained from a written report given to the Principal on behalf of an ethnically-diverse group who had chatted together at school. These wanted First Communion to be "more of an occasion", which in context seemed to be saying that the spread over several weeks lessened impact on the parish. They had various practical suggestions and wanted a strong "veto" on videos.

As was observed, (5.2.2) in addition to the First Communions, each Sunday also had another focus which distracted attention from the First Communions. Holy Communion is both a sign and cause of unity in the Church (e.g. *Lumen Gentium* #7), but that special significance was lessened somewhat by the second emphasis.
7.1 Migration

Migration is the process by which people move from one region/country to another on a temporary/permanent basis, either voluntarily or of necessity. Massive post Worldwar II migration has been studied by social scientists from its social, economic and political aspects. The consequent cultural plurality is an on-going cause of pastoral concern for Churches in Australia and a challenge to research.

The changes and developments in Australia's immigration programme regarding recruitment, official policy and measures taken to remove or alleviate migrant disadvantage show that the resulting heterogeneous population was quite unplanned (e.g. Jupp, J. et al. 1986). Other studies link postwar immigration to the internationalization of industrial capitalism and the consequent internationalization of labour, and claim that Australian labour requirements overrode the original plan for "assimilable" migrants (e.g. Collins, J. 1984).

The cultural diversity that migration brought makes claims on all institutions. To date, research and knowledge about how to service this diversity is patchy and uneven. Settlement policy has moved from one of assimilation, to integration, to multiculturalism. Currently this latest phase is under review.

Australia's immigration programme is the largest within the shortest time of any of the "first" world countries. From 1947 to the present, Australia changed from being a largely mono-cultural country to become one of great cultural and ethnic diversity. In 1947, 9.8 per cent of the population was overseas-born; in 1981 it was 20.6 per cent but if the second generation with at least one parent born overseas were added, it showed over 41 per cent of the population linked to immigration (Hugo, G. 1986:230). The rapid increase
and diversification of the population put a heavy burden on resources and servicing and has "enormous significance" for future planning. Despite all that has been done there is still need for understanding of, and sensitivity towards, cultural diversity within the population so that perceived needs may be met (Hugo, G. 1986:263).

Generally, the Churches followed the prevailing government policies regarding immigrants, and originally concentrated on humanitarian and settlement needs, (Hally, C. 1980a; Faulkner, A. 1980). In 1947 the Catholic Church provided for migrant chaplains to minister to adult migrants whereas children were expected to be assimilated through the parish and school systems, (Hally, C. 1980a). All the Churches were unprepared for the numerical increase and its cultural diversity. Study and research into the situation has been patchy here also (Multicultural Committee, 1984:185).

If, as suggested above, there is need for understanding and sensitivity vis-à-vis cultural diversity in society generally, this is even more imperative within Christian Churches for their credibility. Some church people are increasingly aware of this and see that concomitant with the cultural plurality that has resulted from migration, the Churches face challenges not only in how they minister to different needs but also to their traditional structures, training programmes and church services (e.g. Pittarello, A. 1987; Smolicz, J. 1987; Cox, D. 1986 and Houston, J. 1986). Two recent, noteworthy initiatives were The First National Convention on Pastoral Care in Multicultural Australia, sponsored by the Scalabrinian Fathers and The Intercultural Theological Education in a Multi-faith Society project (1984-5) and the production of The Cultured Pearl (1986) undertaken by the Victorian Council of Churches. Both initiatives offered suggestions and plans for future action by the Churches.
7.2 Immigrant Women

Concerning immigrant women, the socio-economic aspects of immigration have been the main areas addressed by social scientists. They show that the greatest burden is borne by non-Anglophone immigrant women from close-knit, pre-industrial communities who have to join the unskilled workforce in modern, industrial countries like Australia. The double function of co-provider plus traditional wife-mother role, together with exploitation and sexual harassment in the workplace, can exacerbate the stress of marital and inter-generational conflicts due to cultural dissonance, (e.g. Huber, R. 1985; Inglis, C. 1985; Storer, D. ed. 1985; Bottomley, G. 1984 and Dexter, J. 1987).

7.3 "Multicultural" Australia

"Multicultural" Australia was originally linked with equal rights for all under a Labor government in 1973. (Jupp, J. et al. 1986). The term was accepted by later Liberal Governments, with a subtle change in meaning to the right to retain cultural identity. Complexity and confusion have surrounded the concept of "multiculturalism" due largely to the two meanings and two approaches to it, and because these are often intermingled (Castles, S. 1987). For those who follow the culturalist approach, multiculturalism is an "ideology of society" whereby they uphold the maintenance of cultural identities within a cohesive society (Zubrzycki, J. 1982 and Smolicz, J. 1980). Others take multiculturalism as a "principle of social policy", hold that migrant disadvantage is rooted in socio-economic structures, and offer alternative views on immigration programmes and policy changes (e.g. Collins, J. 1984; Jakubowicz, A. 1984 and Castles, S. 1987).

The official policy has taken the culturalist approach, but confusion persists. The concept has aroused considerable academic and public debate, e.g. concerning "multicultural" education (e.g. Smolicz, J. 1980; Bullivant, B. 1980 and Kalantzis, M. & Cope, B. 1980) and regarding government
immigration policy. Professor Blainey's comments in early 1984 and John Howard's criticism in mid-1988 evoked considerable public comment, some prompted by racism and xenophobia, and showed continuing confusion concerning "multicultural Australia".

All this puts considerable pressure on those attempting to interpret social policy and to service the diverse populations of their constituencies. Among those administering these services are persons of both understandings of "multicultural" policy as well as those who are just confused.

Similar confusion has also existed among Church people (e.g. see Faulkner, A. 1980). Whereas cultural plurality is a feature of the Catholic/Universal church as a whole, this reality was remote for most Australian Catholics until the immigrant influx brought "the world" into the local parish. As the case study evidence showed, reactions to that situation varied. Although general principles concerning cultural diversity within the Church have been promulgated from Rome, their actual implementation at the parish level is the responsibility of the parish priest concerned, for whom the urgency of pastoral ministry often leaves little time or energy for the study of, and planning to meet the challenges of, cultural diversity in the parish.

7.4 "Ethnicity and Ethnic Group"

"Ethnicity and Ethnic Group" are related concepts that emerged with the migration phenomenon. "Ethnicity" became a "major concern" of governments, business and social scientists (de Lepervanche, M. 1980). Some trace its lineage from earlier, now academically discredited "race" theories (Banton M. 1983; Miles, R. 1982 and de Lepervanche, M. 1980). Others argue that "ethnicity" developed among deprived migrants who grouped on the basis of some cultural element to gain influence and advantage in welfare societies (e.g. Glazer, N. & Moynihan, D. 1975; Bell, D. in Glazer & Moynihan, eds. 1975). Others again, argue from structural class analysis that the socio-
economic position assigned to migrants evokes their "ethnic" response (e.g. Castles, S. et al. 1984 and de Lepervanche, M. 1980). Officially all Australians are "ethnic" (Zubrzycki, J. 1982) but in common parlance the term is usually applied to those of non-English-speaking backgrounds.

The significance of this term as a category for services is currently hotly debated. Some promote ethnic-specific services; others argue for "mainstreaming", i.e. that mainstream institutions take on the needs of the whole population. This latter approach is very difficult to sort out and needs much attention.

"Ethnicity" is now a feature of most mainline Christian Churches in Australia, especially the Catholic Church which is more ethnically-diversified than is the general population. This means that the traditions and structures from its former predominantly Irish background may no longer be appropriate to the more than half of its membership which is of migrant background (e.g. Multicultural Committee, 1984:184; Pittarello, A. 1987:7). Will the Church in Australia provide "services" for its "ethnic groups" (e.g. migrant chaplains), or on the other hand, plan and work together as a "diversified whole" for a common future together based on their common faith and values?

Previously, with people of predominantly the same language, customs and symbols, there was more or less common understandings of Catholic religious values and celebrations. Today, with the Church's extraordinary ethnic diversity it cannot be presumed that all understandings and expectations are the same just from being "Catholic". Moreover, the whole range of social, educational and faith-development variations add further complexities to the diversity of religious expression among Catholics. The Church officially sees herself as a sign and means of achieving unity among all peoples (Lumen Gentium #1), but the diversity of the whole Church is found now within the Church in Australia. Hence, it can be argued that the Church
here is in a special positon and is challenged to witness to its professed inner reality of unity in diversity (e.g. Hally, C. 1980b:8).

Case Study evidence showed that the women involved had strong desires for Christian community and for the enrichment that could be gained from the various Catholic traditions now present in the local parish. Moreover, there much effort had been expended already towards building Christian community by promoting inter-personal/inter-group relationships. Following these indications, one possible course of action for the future in response to the Church's "ethnic" composition is suggested:

Faced with challenges of diversity yet claiming a common faith, there is need for Australia's Catholics of all backgrounds to come together over time to share their insights and understandings of the essential elements of that faith. That is, not to presume that there is agreement, but to identify the shared "common core" of faith beneath the variety of cultural expressions of it, then from that basis of unity to evaluate from the many possibilities how best to proceed together to build a common future as Church. (This suggested process adapts to the religious sphere the educational technique developed by Kalantzis and Cope in their research, e.g. 1980:38-39.)

Some such process would be necessary preparation also for any real adaptation/change in liturgical celebrations, Church structures or customs to make them more appropriate to the Church's ethnically-diverse composition. In addition to benefits for the Church's mission and ministry needs, such an undertaking would be a powerful witness to society in general. Society would profit also by the resultant lessening of preconceptions and prejudice and the promotion of understanding and co-operation. However, it would take time and require primarily, creative leadership, plus Australia-wide research and consultation including that at the parish level, organization and planning. The effort, though daunting, seems necessary considering the vast changes in the
Church in Australia since its present structures and customs were established. With on-going immigration that situation looks like continuing.

7.5 Religion

The concept of religion varies with the perspective on it: e.g. that of the social scientist, the agnostic or the committed believer.

Modern anthropologists consider religion in the context of human culture. They say religion relates to human integrative needs, whereby people explain their world, and is expressed in symbol and ritual which have strong emotive impact (e.g. Hally, C. 1986:30-31; Geertz, C. 1966:2-4, 25). Others argue that belief in supernatural beings is basic to religion which is a cultural institution whereby humans relate to such beings to seek satisfaction for their desires (e.g. Spiro, M. 1966:96-109). The modern holistic approach sees culture as a society's way of life, but another trend has separated "culture" out as the subjective, expressive elements of life (Kalantzis, M. & Cope, B. 1980:24-27).

Early sociologists opposed traditional religion and philosophy and sought to replace them with the new science, e.g. Saint-Simon, and particularly Comte, held that "scientific sociology" could reform and control society by "social engineering" (Benton, T. 1977:20-30). Later theorists such as Durkheim, also upheld the primacy of society which was the ultimate reality to be revered by its members, who for cohesion and integration needed "religious" beliefs and ritual (Pickering, W. 1975:125 and Robertson, R. 1970:13-17). Others considered the individual's relationship with society and need for meaning in life, e.g. Weber. He analysed the functions of religion from the perspectives of socio-economics and rationality (Robertson, R. 1970). Later advocates of the scientific approach, following Marx, saw religion as a compensatory crutch for pre-socialist man (Robertson, R. 1970:19-21). "Classic" sociologists, themselves agnostics, analysed religious phenomena or religious issues to find scientific alternatives. Many modern sociologists, like
anthropologists, take a holistic view of human societies and see beliefs, symbols, values as the religious system (Robertson, R. 1970:199ff). Opinions differ as to its relevance according to the basic philosophical stance taken.

Since migration has brought to Australia increasing numbers of people of the world's major religions (e.g. Muslim, Buddhist) as well as those of the Judeo-Christian traditions, together with those of various philosophical/ethnical approaches to life, the diversity of attitudes and values that result can increase pressures on social harmony and cohesion. But since throughout history humankind has sought for the meaning and purpose of life and/or a transcendent source of these, the diversity of religions expresses different aspects of the human response to that search for meaning in life. So, in a pluralist society, regardless of the claims of individual groups, each must operate with due regard for the rights and sensitivities of the rest of society.

One response to the perceived need for dialogue and mutual understanding was the decision to establish a Multi-faith Resource Centre in Melbourne in 1985 (Painter, J. 1986:148).

The religious institution and faith referred to in this paper is the Catholic Church under the aspect of its catholicity, because of the plurality of cultural backgrounds of Catholic immigrant women in Australia. The Church worldwide takes direction from a variety of sources and its practice is influenced by its attitudes to the question of plurality. In Australia, the traditional structures and practices of the former largely mono-cultural, Anglophone Church continue although the membership, particularly in urban areas, has become ethnically and culturally diversified. What effect has migration to this different socio-religious environment had on migrant women's practice of religion and rearing their children in their faith? The importance of cultural factors affecting religious experience and the meaning of one significant event in the homeland and Australia were explored in the case study.
7.6 The Catholic Church in Australia

The Catholic Church in Australia, as research shows, now has an even greater plurality of cultures than has the general population and this occurred at a faster rate (Hally, C. 1980a:1; Pittarello, A. 1987:10 and Multicultural Committee, 1984:184). The original response of Christian Churches was to supply pastoral and humanitarian needs of newcomers in the expectations of their eventual assimilation (Hally, C.1980a:29; Faulkner, A. 1980:10 and Lewins, F. 1983). The diversification of the Catholic population has not been reflected in clerical and religious personnel, which situation has been seen as both contributing to, and being caused by, the inflexibility of Church leadership and institutions to adapt structures to accommodate the new diversity (Hally, C. 1980a:13; Smolicz, J. 1987:37 and Kaluski, M. 1988). Criticisms of the Church's response to migrants have been that the Church was "more Australian than Catholic" because "culture divides more than religion unites" (Lewins, F. 1978 and 1983), while another argued that the cultural expression of religion differs, so "religion unites, culture diversifies" (Pittarello, A. 1980). Several have demonstrated that Anglophone Australian Catholics need to have a more positive, constructive approach to migrants (O'Leary, H.1971:148-150 and Cheli, G. 1987:5-6) and that the Church in Australia urgently needs a new self-image and vision for the future in keeping with its plurality of cultures (Hally, C. 1983:87; Pittarello, A. 1987:23 and Cheli, G. 1987:6). In order to accomplish this an adult education programme would be necessary for all levels (Cheli, G. 1987:6-7 and Multicultural Committee, "Strategies" 1984:189ff). Several have expressed the need for an interdisciplinary study and research centre "based on thorough professional foundations" to inform and direct all educational and pastoral programmes and policies (Rome, 1978:19; Hally, C. 1980a:36 who also noted the common factor in Rome 1978 and the Centre for Urban Research and Action Report to

Similar concerns for the on-going education of parishes, clergy, and theological training programmes vis-à-vis the poly-ethnic situation have been addressed and researched by other Australian Christian Churches (e.g. Evans, J. 1986 and Houston, J. 1986).

The Catholic Church in Australia is part of the worldwide Catholic communion of particular Churches sharing basic common beliefs, authority structure and sacramental systems. Before the Second Vatican Council, the Church emphasized uniformity and centralization (Lovison, T. 1987:6 and Hally, C. 1986:40). But the Council, while reasserting the traditional doctrine concerning the Church's divine and human elements (Lumen Gentium #8) also reasserted the principle of unity in diversity, (e.g. Lumen Gentium #13 and Sacred Liturgy #37).

The Catholic Church worldwide comprises not only people "of every race and nation" but also a variety of theological and philosophical opinion. Very "conservative" churchmen or movements, e.g. Archbishop Lefebvre and Opus Dei, continue what they consider "traditional" Catholicism and appeal particularly to persons confused by post-conciliar changes and/or the excesses of permissive societies (Collins, P. 1986 and The Tablet, October, 1987 and 1988). Others argue that the Church must uphold plurality of thought and culture and develop structures to facilitate this (Kerkhofs, J. 1973; de Looz, P. 1973 and Marc, G. 1980); that plurality of structures, ministries, spiritualities will be features of the future Church (Collins, P. 1986:237ff and Leavey, C. 1980). More widespread has been the influence of "Liberation Theology", developed in Latin American "basic Christian communities" formed by Church personnel in response to extreme socio-economic and political oppression (Gutierrez, G. 1973:81ff; Hearne, B. 1984:358 and Collins, P. 1986:142ff). In the complexities of the Latin American scene, two main
emphases in this method of theology have been discerned: one adapts marxist methodology and espouses political action; the other, a pastoral approach, incorporates popular religion and culture (Scannone, J. 1975:216ff). Papal opinion of it has been noted, e.g. Paul VI considered marxist analysis unacceptable (Dorr, D. 1983:167) as also seeking revolution by violent means (Dorr, D. 1983:161-2 and Rome 1975 #37). On the other hand, ecclesiastical "politics" have been detected behind Rome's warnings about liberation theology (Collins, P. 1986:148). Although some liberation theologians claim it is the only method of theology (e.g. Segundo, following Gutierrez, G. 1975:241), others disagree: e.g. its economic bias and neglect of cultural aspects render it defective for Africa (Hearne, B. 1984:368). Also, western political and religious ideologies generally have failed to understand the basic Asian attitude to religious matters as exemplified in "religion socialism" practised by Buddhist villages and monasteries (Pieris, A. 1982:433-6). Thus, although liberation theology has done much for theological renewal, it remains contentious.

This brief overview of aspects of the plurality of culture and thought in the Catholic Church in Australia and worldwide illustrates the complexities facing those in leadership and ministry roles, as well as any social scientist studying it.

To date, the Catholic Church generally has continued in its established traditions. Migrant chaplains minister to their language groups and provide services in designated parish churches. Evidence showed that many persons of migrant background oscillate between chaplaincy and parish, while some opt for one or other if they do maintain their practice. Some parish personnel (as those encountered showed) make great efforts to build "Christian community" among diverse peoples with a long-term view of greater participation in religious events later on. Such efforts depend on the initiative
and resources of local clergy. Moreover, if personnel change, so may the approach in the parish.

7.7 Implications of Findings from the Case Study

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between migration and women's practice of the Catholic religion, and what they felt were the differences in rearing their children religiously in this country. It also sought to identify the importance of cultural factors affecting immigrant women's experience of religious events in Australia; and to compare the meaning of First Holy Communion in the original homeland and in Australia.

It was hypothesized that for women from close-knit, pre-industrial communities where religion was integrated with social life, that communal aspects of the sacraments would predominate e.g. the "rite of passage" for First Communion, whereas in Australia where religion is generally regarded as a personal matter, the personal/devotional aspects would be uppermost.

All this would be seen in the context of the official Roman guidelines (1978) and the realities of the Catholic Church in Australia, i.e. its poly-ethnic composition but generally continuing practices and structures from its former largely mono-cultural background.

To date, only one researcher has investigated the effects of migration on Catholic women's religious practice (Ravalico, P. 1987). The main finding was that immigrant women "can and do identify with the Catholic Church in Australia" but felt deeply the lack of "external manifestations of religiousness" (p.53). Women's perception of the new socio-religious environment varied according to their ethnic background (p.52) but generally they felt that religious practice was different in Australia and this country was a "less good" place in which to rear children religiously (p.47). The effectiveness and value of migrant chaplains was upheld and the need for most Australian clergy to become bilingual emphasized (p.56).
What have been the effects of migration on Catholic women's religious practice? The evidence of this case study shows that women with a strong tradition of family devotions maintain these, and the majority of these also continue regular Sunday worship (Mass) which retains its intrinsic value for them despite its being a culturally different experience here. Consistent with expectations, since religion is culturally acquired, elements identified as important to religious celebrations in the original homeland together formed the total atmosphere of a Christian community celebrating a shared faith and identity. Yet referring to Mass here in a culturally-diverse congregation the women identified themselves as Catholics, often referring to basic faith values beyond cultural differences, even though they felt the differences. This is similar to the findings of Pittarello (1980) and Ravalico (1987) (and the emphasis on "Catholic" rather than "Maronite" recalls McKay's (1985) study of Syrian-Lebanese).

Implications for parishes would be to seek ways of building relationships with and among immigrants so that a true "catholic" community be formed from the diverse people who assemble regularly for common worship. The traditional structures and practices of the Church in Australia are still largely attuned to the dominant, but in many areas minority, Anglophone Australian group, and the Church needs to review the situation to bring itself more in line with the changed composition of its people (as noted by Hally, C. 1980b; Arbuckle, G. 1985; Pittarello, A. 1987 and Smolicz, J. 1987), a difficult but necessary task. Meanwhile an inclusive, welcoming atmosphere helps people feel "at home".

What differences have immigrant women found in rearing their children in their religion here? Case study evidence showed that they identified the changed socio-religious environment as the greatest difference. Migration from cohesive, mono-religious communities where religious values were integrated into daily living and adults were responsible for good example to
the young, to a multi-faith, impersonal "secular" society where religion is kept private, meant that they relied even more on their family and "ethnic" community in rearing children. Traditional means for transmitting the faith through family customs were maintained and children attended Catholic schools. The general aspirations of these women for their children resembled those of Australian-born mothers as did the perceived difficulties of rearing children in a permissive society. All mothers found the general social environment unhelpful for rearing children religiously, which would agree with Ravalico's finding that immigrant women found Australia less good than their original homeland in that regard.

The case study investigated the meaning of First Holy Communion in the original homeland and in Australia and the importance of cultural factors in religious events.

Since the pre-Vatican Church's emphasis was on uniformity (e.g. Lovison, T. 1987:6 and Hally, C. 1986:40), it was not surprising that the evidence showed much similarity between the overseas and local experiences of First Communion, despite different cultures and rites. Similar too, were the views on doctrinal and personal aspects of the sacrament. Differences were found in the two socio-religious environments, which, it is argued, contributed to how well/poorly the event was remembered, and influenced the women's attitudes to their child's experience.

From the evidence it can be argued that in cohesive, mono-religious communities where religion was an identifying factor, First Holy Communion was celebrated by the whole community as an important event for that community, rejoicing in welcoming new members to its "communion". It was also seen as an important day in the child's life when (s)he became fully bonded to the community. Hence the community supported the child and its family in celebrating the event as well as possible so that the child would remember the significant happening. Thus First Holy Communion was actually
a religious rite of passage. The child, for its part, felt it belonged and was valued in the community and felt great happiness in that affirmation. The combination of familial and communal support, plus the strong emotions evoked, ensured the child remembered it.

But in a multi-faith or "secular" society, religious belief and practice were private matters. Parents of candidates for First Communion might/might not both be Catholic, or if so, "practising" ones. Hence the familial as well as the general society could be religiously diversified. Mass and Communion were revered as sacred events for which one prepared devoutly - i.e. a more personal approach to the sacraments. The day was celebrated by the children and their families but not the community at large.

So, although both childhood experiences were similar in appearance, there were socio-religious differences at the familial and communal levels and these affected the total emotional impact. The first experience was well remembered, the second less so.

Concerning First Communion in Australia, although immigrant and Australian-born mothers shared beliefs and expectations concerning it, they differed widely on how it should be celebrated. Again, reasons for differences were sought in the socio-religious backgrounds.

After the event, evidence showed that migrant mothers had almost complete agreement on wanting what they had had for their children. That they retained/reverted to the style of their own experience could be: a) because they perceived it as fulfilling better the personal and communal aspects of the sacrament than did the present practice; or b) a result of the migration experience. In that case, since arriving, because their involvement has been mainly with their own kinfolk, they experienced a "cultural freeze" whereby the homeland experience was enhanced over time and appeared most desirable.

On the other hand, the diversity of approaches among the Australian-born went beyond the hypothesized personal approach, and reflected the
variety of responses to the rapid and radical changes that have occurred in modern society and in the Church since the Council (a situation as described for example, by Collins, P. 1986:3-12; also the lessened cohesion among Catholics in Australia, noted by Leavey, C. 1980). Moreover, their expectations were less dependent on clear memories backed by strong emotions.

The evidence of this study shows that the importance of cultural factors in religious events lies in the affective area, that of emotive impact. Across two countries and rites the symbols and rituals were basically the same, but the atmosphere and impact had more lasting effect in the more cohesive, mono-religious environment. Cultural factors, being so emotive, can easily over-ride basic agreement and need to be addressed lest they foment divisiveness in a situation of cultural diversity.

It must to be noted that the migrant group studied (Lebanese-Syrian) valued their faith, and religion was a strong cultural identifier. Information received showed that many migrants, and Anglophone Australians have a very tenuous link with the Church, but appear for significant events such as First Communion. Hence there is a wide field for study and research, including religious issues such as evangelization, catechesis and pastoral practice.

Several implications can be drawn for future practice concerning First Holy Communion, which, since it concerns the Church's central act of worship, should be a significant event in a culturally-diversified Church. In the post-conciliar age, in trying to achieve a meaningful parish celebration such a Church faces many challenges and each requires considerable study and research, for example:

a) Since sacraments are ecclesial celebrations this implies Christian community based on meaningful relationships. Will this community be envisaged across ethnic groups or within each, while working for unity in plurality?
b) Effective communication skills are more necessary than ever today in pastoral ministry and are more complex because of cultural and language "barriers". Alternatives to large-group "talks" are needed, especially for non-Anglophone persons in sacramental programmes.

c) Together with the desire for greater "Christian community" there was evidence of pre-conceptions concerning other ethnic groups. Some structure seems needed whereby people could meet to share/explain their ideas/traditions and so lessen misunderstanding and ignorance and promote good relations and enrichment.

d) Parental involvement in sacramental programmes logically leads to wider lay ministries, hence the need for on-going adult education in the faith. Cultural diversity makes this more complex to plan and implement, but paradoxically, makes it more imperative.

e) The liturgy needs to be more appropriate to people of diverse cultures but change should only follow thorough research and consultation over some time.

f) This case study showed that beneath any cultural differences, women agreed on basic human and faith values, and expressed common hopes for the future. Further study is needed into the rich resources and potential of the Church's female members from all backgrounds, many of whom are also effectively restricted by their traditions.

These issues are specific aspects of the reality of the Church today, i.e. that migration has changed its former predominantly mono-cultural, Anglophone composition to one of extraordinary cultural and linguistic diversity - a situation compounded further by the "profound and rapid changes" in society. Reviewing literature relevant to the case study and considering the evidence gained, has led to the conclusion that the issues encountered are of
such size and complexity that a "band-aid" approach is quite inadequate. So, what approach should the Church take as it confronts today's challenges?

In contrast to the "hit-and-miss method of responding to needs" disparaged by Arbuckle (1985:345), a reliance on individual initiatives, or a "wait and see" attitude, it is suggested that the Church take an open, purposeful, holistic approach to the realities of its mission and ministry in the context of its heterogeneous composition, assess these realistically and plan for the future making such changes/adaptations to structures and customs as may be found necessary. It has been noted that only one who knows one's "personal and communal past can begin to look honestly at the present and future" (Collins, P. 1986:12). Such is the task which the Church, too, must face with openness and firm purpose in order to arrive at the new self-understanding and vision for the future more congruent with its changed composition and needs, which have been seen to be necessary (see Hally, C. 1983:87; Pittarello, A. 1987 and Cheli, G. 1987). Despite the structural problems of a large and complex institution and the variety of difficulties which could impede/thwart any effort to change/adapt long-established structures and customs, the Church's future effectiveness will be greatly hindered unless such renewal is achieved.

In order to make a valid assessment and realistic plans it would be necessary to have the understanding and insight gained from information gathered by wide-ranging, thorough and rigorous research and study of all aspects of the Church's life at all levels, including consultation and dialogue with "ordinary" laity. Such research and study by competent professionals of all relevant disciplines (e.g. theologians, philosophers, liturgists, social scientists) would be assisted by the establishment of an interdisciplinary research and study centre along the lines advocated by Rome (1978); Hally (1980a) and Arbuckle (1985).
Which particular issues should be explored? Firstly, the Church needs to take seriously the ramifications of its cultural diversity for these touch every aspect of the Church's life and will affect the orientation of all its activities (a suggestion relevant to this was given in 7.4). Moreover, Church personnel particularly need to be well-informed on the cultural processes and aware of the fact that although Catholics share a common faith, together with basic human needs and aspirations, the expression of these is always historically and culturally specific. It will devolve on the leadership to bring diverse peoples together and lead them to share and negotiate if any sort of common future is to evolve. Other issues of considerable urgency are set out in a) to f) above.

Although we live in a time of "profound and rapid change", a time of crisis and decision, history has shown that new life always emerges, although at the present time the form it may take in the future remains a matter of some conjecture (for example, Collins, P. 1986:227ff). It has been asserted that "Catholicism has emerged as one of the truly creative forces in the contemporary world" (Collins, P. 1986:254), so the Church in Australia, whose diversity reflects the "catholicity" of the Church worldwide, has within itself the resources and potential to meet present challenges and plan constructively for the future. That future will result in large measure from what is done/not done today. Hence it has been suggested that the Church take an open, purposeful and holistic approach to today's situation which is already the beginning of its future.


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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEWS WITH MOTHERS

BACKGROUND INFORMATION seeks factual data to aid understanding of respondents' answers.

Q. 1, 2, 3.
Concern early life and education. Attitudes and values differ between persons reared in an extended kinship system and those who grew up in a small, nuclear type family. Education extends one's knowledge and interests and influences one's outlook.

Q. 4, 5, 6. a) for migrants
Concern the trip to Australia, whether that was direct or not, because if someone spent time in a third country that would influence the impact of life in Australia afterwards. The age of migration is significant for the person's adjustment, and the length of time since arrival has bearing also on her attitude.

b) for Australian-born
The experience of spending time in another culture, e.g. working overseas in contrast to a touring holiday, usually affects one's perceptions of reality and broadens the outlook.

Q. 7.
Concerns work experience: The experience and responsibility of a job will affect the woman's life afterwards when she sets up a family unit, and also if she resumes working again. On the other hand, if she has not had such experience, her life will be different.

Q. 8, 9.
Concern the migration experience which would have a different aspect if the woman came as part of her own family unit or alone. Since a woman's attitudes changes (hopefully) over the years, so the age at which she began her family is significant.

Q. 10, 11.
The length of time the woman has lived in the parish would affect her attitudes and feelings about it. Likewise a longterm resident's view will perhaps differ from one who has moved about more. Interpersonal relationships within the parish will depend to some extent on the length of time lived therein.
Cultural attitudes affect religious practice because it is within a certain way of life that one receives religious teaching and follows its customs. This applies also to the central act of Catholic worship the Mass. Traditionally, the Church in Australia has taken the rule of Sunday Mass attendance as one of the norms of the “practising Catholic”. Other societies may regard themselves as equally “Catholic” without the observance of any such behavioural norms. The question concerning Mass attendance is not concerned with legalities, but rather, seeks some understanding of the importance of the Mass in the woman's life today.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

1. What is your home country?  
   a) Australia  
   b) Lebanon  
   c) other...

2. Where did you grow up?  
   a) in the country  
   b) in a village  
   c) in a town  
   d) in a city

3. How many years did you spend at school?  
   a) 0-6  
   b) 7-10  
   c) 11-12  
   d) other...

4. After leaving your home country did you stay in any other country before coming to Australia?  
   a) Yes  
   b) No  
   c) If yes, i) which country?  
      ii) for how long?

OR IN THE CASE OF AUSTRALIAN-BORN WOMEN:  
4. Have you ever travelled or lived outside Australia?  
   a) Yes  
   b) No  
   c) If yes, i) to which country?  
      ii) for how long?

5. a) Which year did you come to Australia?  
    b) Your age when you came to Australia?
6. Your age now?
   a) -20
   b) 21-29
   c) 30-39
   d) 40-49
   e) 50+

7. Have you ever been employed?
   a) Yes
   b) No

   If yes, i) when?
   ii) what did you do?
   iii) where, i.e. Australia/home country?
   iv) for how long?
   v) what work do you do at present?

8. Was your family unit formed in your home country or in Australia?
   a) home country
   b) Australia

9. What age were you when you started your family?
   a) 15-20
   b) 21-25
   c) 26-30
   d) 31-35
   e) other...

10. How long have you lived in this parish?
    a) 0-1 yr
    b) 2-4 yr
    c) 5-7 yr
    d) 8-10 yr
    e) 11+

11. Have you lived in other parishes in Australia?
    a) Yes
    b) No

    If yes, how many?
    i) 1
    ii) 2
    iii) 3
    iv) 4+
12. How often do you attend Mass?

**COMMENT**

a) daily
b) weekly
c) monthly
d) on feastdays
e) occasionally
f) other

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

**PRELIMINARIES:** It is important that the respondents realize that there are no "right" or "wrong" answers; that what is sought is the true expression of their experience as they see it, of their opinions and feelings. It is important too, that they know that their information is confidential and will be honoured as such. In no way will they be identifiable in the results of the research.

Throughout the questionnaire suggested options for answers are listed which may serve as prompts if needed - but are not the only possibilities. Often thought is needed. Extra comments can be enlightening, and can be added at any time, while taking care to avoid what is irrelevant to the study.

**THE FIRST SET OF QUESTIONS** deals with the woman's practice of religion. Vatican II desired that people participate in the Eucharist "knowingly, devoutly and actively", so that they gradually become more united to God and each other that "finally God may be all in all", (Const. on Liturgy, #48). People on the Move (1978) reasserted that the local parish is to welcome immigrants and provide spiritual care and other needs as human dignity demands.

At First Holy Communion the Church celebrates young members actually sharing its communion, and is meant to be a step in a lifelong process. These questions attempt to follow that process into the mother's adult life and to see what cultural factors influence the person, how the migration process has affected religious practice, and what factors help/impede relationships with other parishioners with whom she now attends Mass. These questions concern attitudes to other ethnic groups in the parish.

**Q. 1.1 & 1.2**

These concern the woman's views on the Mass in her life. For the migrant, this involves questions about how it was in the first homeland, since that colours expectations and experience here. Each migrant chaplain offers Mass for his own language group in certain churches. Some migrants may go there sometimes, and at other times to the parish. Others opt to attend one. The question seeks to identify the woman's preference and why.
Q. 1.3  
This is very important because it reflects the woman's life experience and faith development since her own First holy Communion - which in turn will affect that of her child.

Q 1.4  
Included are questions concerning the "Church community" because that is an essential aspect of the celebration of the Sacraments, and the communal aspect involves the "multicultural" dimension today.

Q 1.5  
Since the priest takes the place of the Bishop at the parish level, in a way, he represents the Universal Church (Const. Liturgy, #42). He presides at and offers the Mass, so is a key person in the parish, for without him there would be no Mass and Communion. Hence relationships with priests, are relevant.

Q 1.6  
These questions concern attitudes to other ethnic groups in the parish.

MIGRANT (N.B. Section 1 for Australian-born had the same questions, as applicable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1 a)</th>
<th>Did you like going to Mass in your home country?</th>
<th>i) Yes</th>
<th>ii) No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**COMMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b)</th>
<th>Which specific aspect of the Mass meant most to you then?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>praying privately during Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>receiving Holy Communion at Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii)</td>
<td>celebrating with the Church community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv)</td>
<td>socializing afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v)</td>
<td>other .... specify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c)</th>
<th>Why did you value that most?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1.2 a) Now, in Australia, which Mass do you PREFER to attend?  
| i) | your own language Mass                           |
| ii) | the regular parish Mass                          |

**COMMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b)</th>
<th>At that Mass (whichever you prefer) which aspect means most to you?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>praying privately during Mass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii)</td>
<td>celebrating with the Church community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv)</td>
<td>socializing afterwards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
v) other ... specify

c) Why does that mean most to you?

1.3 Now, in your adult Christian life, what is for you, the significance of receiving Holy Communion at Mass?
   a) full participation in the Mass
   b) being closely united with others present
   c) source of grace/strength for Christian life
   d) source of healing/forgiveness
   e) time to talk personally to God/Jesus
   f) other .... specify

COMMENT

1.4 Do you take part in any Church associations/groups? e.g. altar soc. choir, Minister of Eucharist...
   a)  
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 

b) If yes, which?

   c) Did you take part in any such groups in your home country?
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 
      iii) which?

1.5 a) Do you have much contact with priests?  
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 

   b) Do you find them approachable/understanding?  
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 

c) Do they provide spiritual help when you need it?  
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 

   d) Is it different for you with priests from your home country and Australian priests?  
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 

   e) If yes, how is it different?

COMMENTS

1.6 a) At Sunday parish Mass would you like to see any adaptation so that people of languages other than English could share sometimes e.g. readings, prayers, hymns?
      i) Yes 
      ii) No 

COMMENT
b) Have you made friends among other parishioners here:
   i) Anglo-Australian Catholics?
   ii) Catholics of other backgrounds?

COMMENT

THE SECOND SET OF QUESTIONS: concerns the mother rearing her child in its religion in Australia today. They seek to identify the religious and cultural factors and values that influence the woman as she raises her child.

Q. 2.1 & 2.2
Social change is a feature of most countries today. The first two questions refer to society generally in Australia, and specific groups that may affect the child's life. A SPECIFIC ANSWER is sought to these questions, e.g. what is most harmful/most helpful in her opinion - not a general view. Extra comment may be added below. In order to be specific, she would need to consider before answering such questions.

Q. 2.3
Is important - what does she consider THE MOST IMPORTANT THING SHE DOES to rear her child in its faith.

Q. 2.4
Is related, but quite different. It seeks HER reasons for choosing Catholic schooling, and HER opinions on its religious instruction.

Q. 2.5
First Holy Communion is a significant step in the initiation of the child into the Catholic community/parish, and is the focus of its religious training at present. Nevertheless, it does not take place in a vacuum, but in a multi-faceted social milieu. This question seeks to identify the cultural and religious elements the woman hopes to pass on to her child, and why and the MAIN BENEFIT she would hope for from the "multicultural" society. Any other comments can be added below.

2.1 The world your children are growing up in has changed from that in which you grew up, so that the way your children are being brought up is somewhat different to the way you were reared. So, to bring up your children in their religious tradition in Australia today.
a) which social influence today do you think is the most helpful?
   i) children have more freedom
   ii) children are given more responsibility
   iii) they have more money, more material goods
   iv) they receive a broader education
   v) they are helped to understand their religion
   vi) have less rote learning of religion
   vii) other ... specify

b) Do you think it would be any different if you were rearing them in your home country?
   i) Yes
   ii) No

EXPLAIN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>c) Which social influence today do you think is the most harmful?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i) more freedom - permissive society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii) more money - consumer society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii) adverse influence of media - TV, video ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv) availability of hard drugs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v) availability of &quot;acceptable&quot; drugs, i.e. cigarettes, alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vi) social violence, crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vii) fears of nuclear war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>viii) looser family ties, less respect for elders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ix) other ... specify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d) Why do you think that is the most harmful influence?

e) Do you think it would be any different if you were rearing them in your home country?
   i) Yes
   ii) No

EXPLAIN

2.2 As your children are trained in their religious traditions, what do you think is the most important thing that
a) THE FAMILY does for them?
   i) provides love and support
   ii) good example and training
   iii) family prayer
   iv) other ... specify
b) THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL does for them?
   i) gives systematic religious education
   ii) good general education
   iii) example of Christian community
   iv) good discipline
   v) other ... specify

c) THE CHURCH/PARISH does for them?
   i) provides community worship and sacraments
   ii) example of Christian community
   iii) supportive, caring community
   iv) other ... specify

d) THE GENERAL COMMUNITY does for them?
   i) offers acceptance, respect
   ii) offers equality and access to resources
   iii) other ... specify

COMMENT

2.3 What do you think is the most important thing that you do to bring up your children in their religion?
   a) give good example
   b) practise faith with them
   c) Catholic schooling
   d) other ... specify

2.4 a) Why did you enrol your child at the Catholic school?

b) Are you satisfied with the religious instruction there?
   i) Yes
   ii) No
   iii) If not, why not?

2.5 Postwar immigration has brought to Australia many different peoples, so that your children are growing up in a society comprised of people from many other cultures, of many different religions or with no regular religious upbringing.

a) Do you think this great cultural variety is helpful as you rear your children in their faith?
   i) Yes
   ii) No
   iii) other ... specify

b) Why do you think that?
c) What would you want most for your children to gain from this experience of growing up in a poly-ethnic and multi-religious society? (i.e. socially and religiously)

i) to retain their own cultural traditions
ii) to gain tolerance, acceptance of other traditions
iii) to learn to discern the good in other cultures
iv) to retain the basic teachings of their Christian faith
v) an enrichment of their Christian faith
vi) other ... specify

THE THIRD SET OF QUESTIONS relates to the mother’s own experience of First Holy Communion.

Although, for some, recollections generally may be dim, certain aspects may be well-remembered. The questions hope to obtain as much DETAIL as possible so as to build up as clear a picture as possible of the event-as-remembered and what it meant to her and her family at that time. Time and experience may colour the memories, but these too, will be relevant to the general cultural background.

The aim is to compare the past and present preparation and celebrations from the viewpoints of Church practice and also in different cultural settings, and to try to identify the importance of such cultural factors for the participants.

Q. 5
Is important since First Holy Communion is meant to be a beginning of a lifetime practice, not a one-time event, and its significance should grow and deepen over time. As traditional custodian of religious values, the mother, through her actions and attitudes is usually a vital figure in the religious development of her child. The question is significant at this time especially.

3.1 These questions will deal with your own experience of First Communion. Looking back to the preparation for your First Communion:

a) What kind of preparation was it?
   i) explanatory lessons
   ii) questions and answers
   iii) both above
   iv) any special preparation, e.g. a retreat day
   v) other ... specify
b) Who gave the lessons?
   i) a Sister-teacher
   ii) a priest
   iii) a lay-teacher
   iv) other .... specify

c) How long did the preparation take?
   i) several weeks
   ii) several months
   iii) other ... specify

d) How did you feel about the preparation as a child?

e) What seemed important to you at that time?

f) What did your parents do to help you?

g) As a child, what did you think was important to your parents about your First Communion?

h) How old were you?
   i) 6-8
   ii) 9-10
   iii) 11-12
   iv) other ... specify

3.2 As you think back to the Mass for your First Communion:

a) Who celebrated it?
   i) Bishop
   ii) priest

b) Where did you sit in Church?
   i) up front with children
   ii) with parents/family

c) What was special for that Mass?
   i) flowers
   ii) decorations
   iii) choir/singing
   iv) children participating
   v) other ... specify
3.3 What happened afterwards?
   a) Did you celebrate?
      i) Yes [ ]
      ii) No [ ]
   b) How?
   c) Where?
   d) With whom?
   e) Did you receive gifts?
   f) From whom?

COMMENTS

3.4 a) What is your most vivid memory now of your First Communion?
   b) Why do you remember that so vividly?
   c) How did you feel on your First Communion day?

3.5 Many years have passed since your First Holy Communion. What would you say has been the significance of that event for your life as a Christian since your First Holy Communion?

COMMENTS

THE FOURTH SET OF QUESTIONS examines the mother's views on the preparations for, and her expectations for, the child's First Holy Communion.

Again, the aim is to identify the cultural and religious elements underlying the values. Once again, specific answers are sought, which may require a little thought, e.g. considering differences between her own and her child's preparation.

The questions are in detail, and each has its own importance to the whole questionnaire.

Q. 4.8
Is very important for it reaches to the heart of the celebration regarding the child's personal religious life and development as a member of the Catholic faith community today and facing the future.

Q. 4.9
Flows from the Church's teaching on the Eucharist (Mass and Communion) as being the greatest means of union with God (personal aspect) and with one another (social aspect), and focuses on the latter.

The question seeks information as to what could hinder the expression of the sharing of which the Sacrament is a sign, as well as suggestions for greater mutual understanding and unity in the future. Again, as much detail as possible is hoped for.
4.1 These questions concern your child's First holy Communion. N. . . . . . . is being prepared now for First holy Communion. What do you want most from that preparation for N. . . . . . ?

4.2 How is your family helping N. . . . . to prepare?
   a) taking N. . . . . to Mass
   b) explaining the Mass to N. . . . .
   c) using the booklet from school
d) other .... specify.................................................................

4.3 How does the family feel about N. . . . .'s First Communion?...........................

4.4 Are there any differences in the way N. . . . . is being prepared and the way you were?
a) yes
b) no
c) if yes, what are they?..............................................................
d) How do you feel about the differences?..................................
e) Why is it different now, do you think?.................................

4.5 What changes/developments would you like to see in the future concerning your children's preparation for and celebration of, First Holy Communion?

4.6 a) What will N. . . . . wear?.............................................................
b) How do you feel about that?..................................................

4.7 a) Will the family celebrate? i) Yes
   b) If yes, with whom?
   i) immediate family
   ii) extended family
   iii) friends
   iv) neighbours
   v) other ..............................................................
   c) Where will they celebrate?
   i) at home
   ii) other
   specify..........................................................
d) How does the family feel about the celebration?..........................

4.8 What do YOU think is the significance of First Holy Communion for N. . . . growing up in the Church in Australia today?..............................................
4.9 a) First Communion is an important event for the children, their families and the parish. Do you find any difficulties in sharing such religious experiences in your new homeland? e.g.
   i) with "Anglo"-Australian Catholics
   ii) with Catholics of other backgrounds

   b) Could you suggest any ways of overcoming these difficulties?

COMMENTS
APPENDIX II: INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS

1. Parish priest
2. School Principal
3. Multicultural and Religious Education Curriculum Project Person
   (N.B. Religious Education co-ordinator was a Grade 3 teacher)
4. Community liaison person
5. Grade 3 teacher
6. Grade 3 teacher
7. Sister who takes State School children.
8. Sister who works among needy migrants.

In the main, these questions are the same as those asked for the mothers, in order to get the corresponding views from these key persons to build up as complete a picture as possible of the expectations and opinions of all concerned in the First Holy Communion event.

The general attitude and approach to First Holy Communion came through clearly at the School Meeting for parents and the Parish Mass and Meeting held some weeks later, so that aspect is not covered here.

Three questions particular to this group will be noted as they appear.

CODE

2.1 The world in which the children are growing up is a changed/Changing world, and so they are being reared somewhat differently today.

a) To bring up CHILDREN IN THEIR RELIGIOUS TRADITION TODAY, WHICH SOCIAL INFLUENCE DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST HELPFUL?

| i) | Chn have more freedom |
| ii) | Chn are given more responsibility |
| iii) | Chn have more money, material goods |
| iv) | Chn receive a broader education |
| v) | Chn are helped to understand their religion |
| vi) | Chn have less rote learning of religion |
| vii) | Other ... specify |

COMMENT

--------------------------------------------------------------------------
b) AND WHICH INFLUENCE IN TODAY'S SOCIETY DO YOU CONSIDER THE MOST HARMFUL?

| i) more freedom - permissive society |
| ii) more money - consumer society |
| iii) adverse influence of media, e.g. TV, video |
| iv) availability of hard drugs |
| v) availability of 'acceptable' drugs, e.g. cigarettes, alcohol |
| vi) social violence and crime |
| vii) fears of nuclear war |
| viii) looser family ties, less respect for elders |
| ix) other ... specify |

c) COMMENT

d) WHY do you think that is the most harmful?

COMMENT

2.2 As children are trained in their religious traditions, what do you think is THE MOST IMPORTANT THING that:

a) THE FAMILY does for them?

| i) gives love and support |
| ii) gives good example and training |
| iii) family prayer |
| iv) other .... specify |

COMMENT

b) ... to rear the children in their religious traditions today, What is the MOST IMPORTANT THING that the CATHOLIC SCHOOL does for them?

| i) provides systematic religious education |
| ii) provides good general education |
| iii) offers example of Christian community |
| iv) good discipline |
| v) other ... specify |

COMMENT
c) THE CHURCH/PARISH does for them?

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<td>i) provides community worship and sacraments</td>
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<td>ii) example of Christian community</td>
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<td>iii) supportive, caring community</td>
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<td>iv) other ... specify</td>
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COMMENT


d) the GENERAL COMMUNITY does for them?

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<td>i) offers acceptance, respect</td>
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<td>ii) offers equality and access to resources</td>
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COMMENT


4.1 What DO YOU WANT MOST FOR THE CHILDREN from their preparation for First Holy Communion?

COMMENT


4.5 What CHANGES/DEVELOPMENTS would you like to see in THE FUTURE concerning preparation for, and celebration of, First Holy Communion?

COMMENT


4.8 What do you think IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF First HOLY COMMUNION for children growing up in the Church in Australia today?


2.5 Postwar II Immigration has brought to Australia MANY DIFFERENT PEOPLES so that the children are growing up in a society comprised of people of MANY DIFFERENT CULTURES, OF VARIOUS RELIGIONS or with no regular religious upbringing.

a) Do you think this great cultural diversity is HELPFUL as you teach the children their faith?

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COMMENT


b) WHY do you think that?
c) What would you WANT MOST for the children TO GAIN from this experience of GROWING UP IN A POLY-ETHNIC AND MULTI-RELIGIOUS society? (social gain and religious gain)

| i) | to retain their own cultural traditions |
| ii) | to gain tolerance and acceptance of other traditions |
| iii) | to learn to discern the good in other cultures |
| iv) | to retain the basic teachings of their Christian faith |
| v) | an enrichment of their Christian faith |
| vi) | other ... specify |

| 4.9 Vatican II said again that the Eucharist is the sign and means of unity. First Holy Communion is an important event for the children, their families and the parish. |

a) Do you find there are any DIFFICULTIES IN SHARING SUCH RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCES AMONG THE DIFFERENT GROUPS IN THE PARISH? eg.

| i) | "Anglo"-Australians and migrants |
| ii) | Different 'ethnic' groups with each other |
| iii) | "Anglo"-Australians with other "Anglo"-Australians? |

b) Could you suggest any WAYS OF OVERCOMING THESE DIFFICULTIES?

**NB.**

4.9 c), d) and e) are particular to this questionnaire because they are aspects more relevant to their parish experience.

c) Do such events as First Holy Communion ACTUALLY TOUCH/INVOLVE PARISHIONERS other than those directly concerned in any way?

| i) | Yes |
| ii) | No |
| iii) | other .... specify |

d) Do YOU EXPERIENCE ANY DIFFICULTIES with the First Holy Communion event?

| i) | Yes |
| ii) | No |
| iii) | other .... specify |

COMMENT:............................................................................................................
e) Do migrant CHAPLAINS HAVE ANY ROLE in the First Holy Communion event?

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COMMENT

1.6 a) At the Sunday parish Mass would you like to see ANY ADAPTATION/CHANGE so that PEOPLES OF LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH could share sometimes e.g. in readings, hymns, prayers?

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COMMENT
APPENDIX III: CATEGORIES FOR ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

1. Social Change and Its Influence

2. General Community

2.2d

3. Multi-ethnic Society and Culturally-diverse Church

2.2c

5. Parish and Priests

2.2b

4. Parish School

2.4

6. Mass and Holy Communion

1.1

1.2

1.3

1.6

3.5

4.8

7. Expectations from Homeland Experience

3.1

3.2

3.3

3.4

8. Family Preparation and Attitudes

2.2a

2.3

4.1

4.2

4.3

4.4

4.5

4.6

4.7

Ceremony - Preparation Event Evaluation

CONTROL GROUP OF ANGLOPHONE AUSTRALIAN-BORN

EXPERIENCE OF FIRST HOLY COMMUNION in MULTI-ETHNIC AUSTRALIA by OVERSEAS-BORN MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN
APPENDIX IV: EVALUATION

1. Did you find the First Communion Mass was a good experience for your child?

2. Did you and/or your husband (family) present your child for First Communion?

3. What were the reasons for those who did not take up the child?

4. What things about the Mass pleased you?

5. Were there any aspects of the Mass that displeased you?

6. What helped make it a happy/memorable day for your child?

7. Do you have any comments/suggestions?