



AUSTRALIAN
CATHOLIC BISHOPS
CONFERENCE

BISHOPS COMMISSION FOR LIFE, FAMILY AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

MEDIA STATEMENT

SEPTEMBER 14, 2026

Research lifts the veil on early years of marriage

Researchers are seeking the help of Catholics in their first decade of marriage to share their experiences over the month of September.

The Bishops Commission for Life, Family and Public Engagement is funding the research project which is being managed by the Parish and Marriage Resource Centre (PMRC).

The project responds to concerns raised in the late Pope Francis' 2016 apostolic exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* ('The Joy of Love').

"Pope Francis had a particular concern for the newly married" explains Bishop Tony Percy, Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney. "He recognised that as a Church we have tended to focus on preparation for marriage and then, after the wedding, have more or less left couples to fend for themselves."

"We know it's a time of great challenge for married couples but in order to provide better support, we need to hear from the people living it. So we're funding a professional survey"

Researchers have already collected 440 responses, but more are needed.

"We hope to reach 1000 respondents over September for best research results," said project manager, Jessica George.

The final analysis will be conducted before the end of the year with a comprehensive research report to follow.

The report is expected to be made available for people working with the newly married, to help them understanding the needs, challenges and joys of marriage experiences.

Couples married in the last decade where at least one spouse is Catholic are asked to contribute their valuable insights to this research

The survey is now live at <https://thepmrc.org/survey>