



From the *Looking Forward* Gatherings 2014

(Dot points from the powerpoint presentation).

Why the steady decline in engagement with Catholic faith?

These are some of the factors:

- Change in methods of learning – inquiry/exploration rather than “off-by-heart facts.”
- No longer using force or fear.
- Philosophy of seeing children as individuals – “they can make up their own minds about faith.”
- No longer have the ‘osmosis’ factor – Catholic faith growing through weekly exposure to faith.
- Communication with cultures and religions other than own (which raises many questions).
- Rise of personal spirituality (many factors contribute to this including easy access to new information/philosophies, lack of time, feeling let down by church as institution).
- Fluidity and mobility – we don’t reside in the same place for most of our lives. We often travel away from home on the weekend.
- The culture of atheism and science/rationalism has a pervasive presence, strengthened by media negativity about religious faith.
- Many Catholics are no longer part of a migrant community who draw strength from the identity of their faith and the community /home connectedness it gives.
- Church gathering and parish life have been replaced by other more effective & enjoyable ways to be ‘community’ and of sharing news and being neighbours.