



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

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## **ARCHBISHOP SAYS “WE ARE KEEN TO LISTEN” ABOUT MARRIAGE AND FAMILY**

One in four people in the Perth metropolitan and rural areas is being asked to take part in a Vatican survey initiated by Pope Francis on marriage and the family.

The questionnaire asks how the family is supported by both the Church and society. It poses questions on marriage, divorce, same-sex attraction, parenting and other challenges that affect contemporary family life.

Every Catholic, whether active or inactive in practising the Christian faith, is encouraged to take part before the survey deadline of Thursday, 12 February.

According to the 2011 national census, Roman Catholics make up 24.4 percent of those who affiliate themselves to a religious body making them the largest individual faith grouping in the Perth region.

The survey results will form the basis of a global synod of Catholic bishops due to take place at the Vatican from October 4 to 25, 2015. The main theme of discussions at the upcoming synod will be 'The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World'.

This synod follows an earlier extraordinary synod in the Vatican in October, 2014 which discussed the family and brought together about 90 percent of the world's bishops' conferences, the heads of Eastern Catholic churches, around 800 Catholic organizations and Vatican officials.

The results of the 2014 extraordinary synod are now contained in a working document, or *Lineamenta*, prepared for the 2015 Synod. Catholics are asked to read and reflect upon the *Lineamenta* and to then answer 30 questions.

Speaking on the survey, the Catholic Archbishop of Perth, the Most Rev Tim Costelloe, said that it offers a great opportunity for the Church to listen carefully to the lives of all those in the Perth region who, to whatever degree, identify as Catholic.

“I am hoping that those who see themselves on the edges of the Church, or who feel excluded from it, will consider responding.” said Archbishop Costelloe. “Their opinions are particularly important.”

“My desire is that a substantial number of Catholics will respond to at least some of the questions being posed. We are keen to listen.”

The questionnaire can be completed online by visiting [www.perthcatholic.org.au](http://www.perthcatholic.org.au), by email, fax, and mail, and accessed through Facebook and Twitter.

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