

# SURVEY RESULTS AND THE TASK AHEAD

To everyone who participated in the Social Justice Survey—**thanks!** We appreciate the time and thoughtful consideration given to your responses. The results have now been summarised.

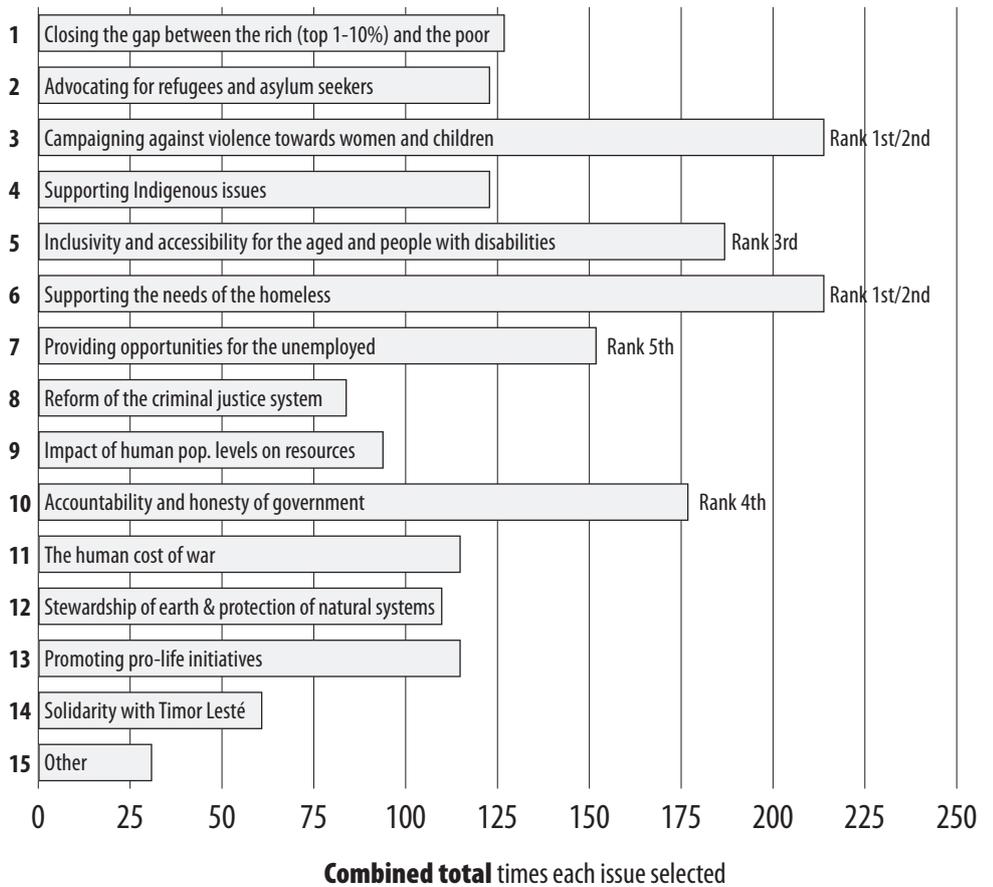
The top 5 ranking issues were:

- Campaigning against violence towards women and children
- Supporting the needs of the homeless
- Inclusivity and accessibility for the aged and people with disabilities
- Accountability and honesty of government
- Providing opportunities for the unemployed

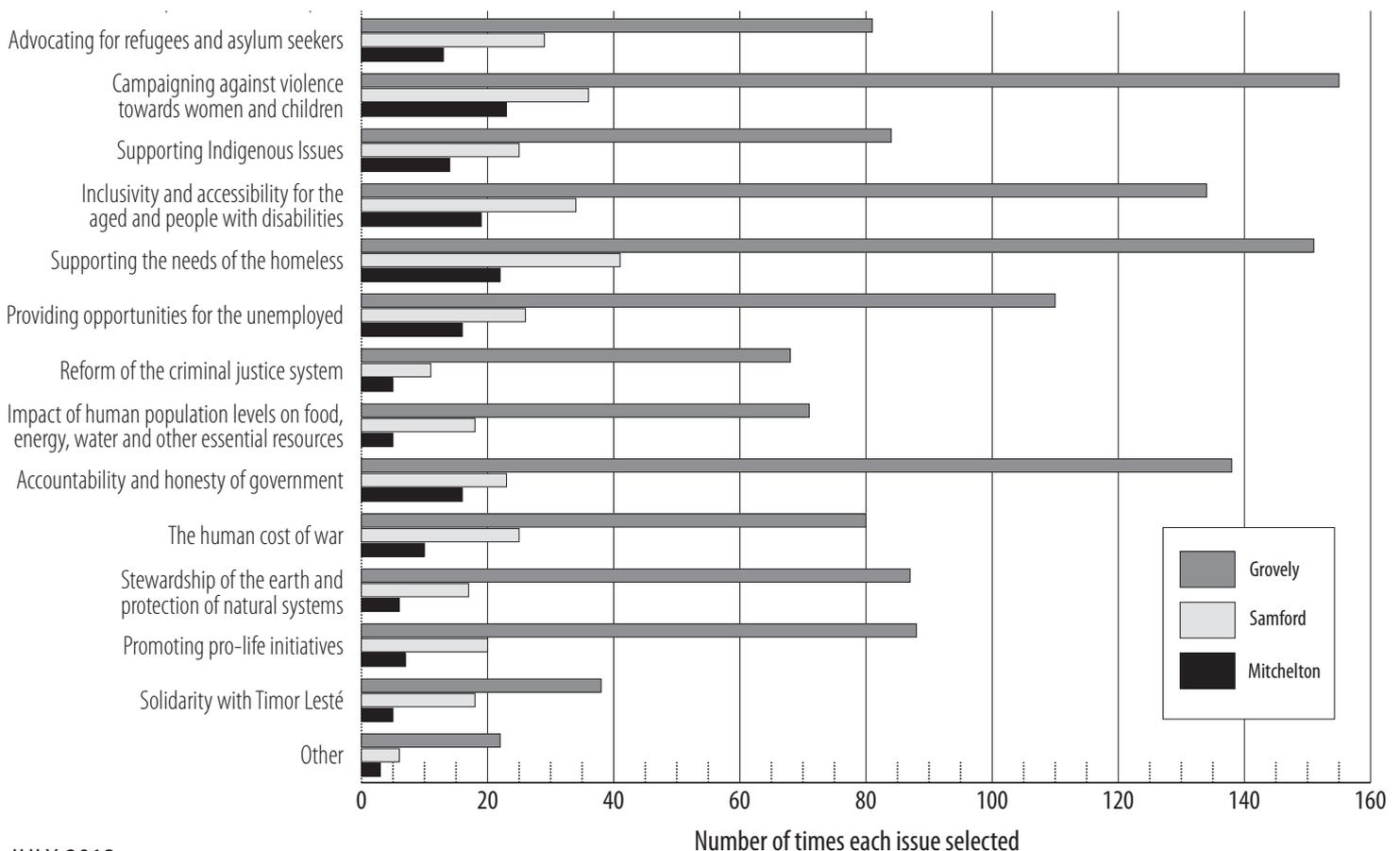
We intend to draw out these issues and seek further input and participation from the parish, particularly from those individuals who expressed an interest in ongoing involvement.

Action for social justice is an important ministry of Catholic life and so we invite parishioners to contribute in whatever way possible.

## Combined results from our three Catholic communities



## Separate results from Grovely, Samford and Mitchelton Catholic Communities



# Spotlight on the top 5 ranked issues

## Campaigning Against Violence Towards Women and Children

Around one-in-three Australian women have experienced physical violence and almost one-in-five have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. For certain groups, this statistic may be much higher. We have also seen evidence of institutional violence in particular communities or groups (e.g military / football codes).

As for children, in the last decade the number of reports of child abuse or neglect in Queensland has tripled and the number of children in out-of-home (foster) care has doubled (tripled in the case of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children). At the same time communities are becoming increasingly fractured, families smaller and more isolated, and neighbours less inclined to get involved. It's time to get involved, collectively and individually, to stop violence against women and children.

## Supporting the needs of the homeless

The homeless are with us and need comfort and support to help them improve their lives. We need support from our wider parish communities to provide this assistance and would welcome offers of financial or "in kind" help to fit with the survey results.

## Inclusivity and Accessibility for the Aged and People with Disabilities

Inclusiveness and Accessibility is everybody's business. You could say it is our obligation. Being aware of barriers confronting people and be proactive as a voice for social justice. We need go no further than the Gospel of the Good Samaritan to find the recipe /solution.

## Accountability and Honesty of Government

It is often said that "We get the Government we deserve" so with a Federal Election looming what are we going to do about it?

It is timely that Australia's Bishops have released a Vote for the Common Good election statement urging Catholics to get involved in the political process. In this the Bishops "encourage Catholics to look beyond their own individual needs to apply a different test at the ballot box

– the test of the common good. The good of the individual and the good of society as a whole must be brought together in harmony. When they are, we have the common good. Catholic tradition holds that the common good is underpinned by the promotion and protection of human dignity. Implicit in seeking the common good is the desire to serve the poor, the marginalised, the sick and the forgotten in our community."

To read the statement go to: <http://www.catholicsvote2013.org.au/>

If we can arrange a "Meet the Candidates" forum in the lead-up to the election, what questions would you put to our local candidates to test them on their perspective of the "common good"?

## Providing Opportunities for the Unemployed

It's tempting to think that there's nothing terribly wrong with an unemployment rate of around 5.6%, but we need to recognise that this is an average. Furthermore it is not a measure of underemployment, or increasing wage disparity. For those that are unemployed, increasing costs of living can compound factors that make accessing suitable employment difficult (e.g accessing transport). In Queensland, certain regions (e.g Far North) have an unemployment rate twice the rate of South East Queensland.

In addition, certain groups are more likely to experience unemployment, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, young people, people with disabilities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Indigenous Australians have a rate of unemployment around three times higher than the national unemployment rate.

How do we as a parish support those most in need to access the world of work?

*The emergence of these five issues as top ranking has given our group some insight into what the majority of our fellow parishioners regard as most important. They provide us with an initial focus, but we certainly intend to respond to other social justice issues where the need is most pressing and where there is opportunity to make a difference.*

*St William's Social Justice Group will communicate more in the weeks and months ahead about how our parish can be involved in ways to address these justice issues in our community. As ever, we welcome anyone interested to come along to our monthly meetings—the 3rd Wednesday of the month in the St William's Parish library.*

These were some of the 'other' issues and concerns raised by respondents on the Social Justice Surveys.

## Health care and inclusivity

- Health care for poor people
- Support mental health awareness
- Drug addiction/Substance abuse – its impact on our community
- Aboriginal housing and health
- Aged care
- Reach out to the old and young

## Youth in society and in the Church

- Initiatives to promote better livelihoods & futures for youth
- Youth – Homelessness and Mental Health
- How to make Mass more interesting for young people
- Keeping our youth at church

## Equality for gay people, women and divorced people within Church and wider community

- Advocating for an end to discrimination against our gay brothers and sisters at a parish and wider level
- Creating equal rights for the gay and homosexual community
- End discrimination against women and gay people in the Church
- Allowing same sex couples to marry
- Justice for divorced Catholics in the Church
- Opportunities for women in a male dominated church hierarchy

## Sexual abuse

- [Preventing/advocating against] Molestation of children
- Healing of Church through legal acceptance of its betrayers

## Education

- Schools—closing the gap between richest 10% and poorest
- Second chance educational opportunities for those in need
- Education access and affordability for all

## Violence

- Cut out sectorial violence
- Campaigning against all violence
- Support for victims of crime

## Other

- Sustainable economics
- Accountability and honesty of society in general
- Making media accountable
- Wage justice for those in the clothing industry
- United churches—one body of Jesus Christ