

# Experiences of Ministry Project Findings 2011-13:

## Summary & Comparison

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➤ The Experiences of Ministry Project is an independent research project seeking to understand factors that may better support clergy well-being and growth.

➤ To date it has been formed of two activities:

**Experience of Ministry Surveys** (EMS11, EMS13, EMS15) - large surveys of representative clergy samples and emerging cohort (>3000 respondents to date)

**Patterns of Priestly Practice (3P) project** - diary study of 193 incumbents and 28 interviews

➤ Methodology:

1. Self-reported survey data / Psychometric approach / Mainly quantitative
2. Longitudinal data collection



**Table 1. EMS13 Sample Roles**

		In receipt of a stipend		A self-supporting role		Active retired		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<i>Type of role</i>	Incumbent	553	46.5	6	1.3	1	0.8	560	31.6
	Priest-in-Charge	149	12.5	11	2.4	1	0.8	161	9.1
	Ordained Local Minister	2	0.2	63	13.5	7	5.8	72	4.1
	House-for-Duty	3	0.3	18	3.9	3	2.5	24	1.4
	Chaplain	41	3.5	49	10.5	8	6.7	98	5.5
	Diocesan role	30	2.5	1	0.2	3	2.5	34	1.9
	Non-stipendiary role	0	0.0	123	26.4	32	26.7	155	8.7
	Minister in Secular Employment	0	0.0	66	14.2	2	1.7	68	3.8
	Dual role	324	27.3	104	22.3	26	21.7	454	25.6
	Pioneer	42	3.5	7	1.5	0	0.0	49	2.8
	Associate minister, et al	25	2.1	1	0.2	0	0.0	26	1.5
	Other	19	1.6	17	3.6	37	30.8	73	4.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1188</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1774</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	Part time	72	6.1	380	81.5	109	95.6	561	31.8

## Spiritual Growth

'To what extent have you OBSERVED CHANGES to the following amongst those you serve over the last 24 months?'

**Table 6. Responses to EMS13 Spiritual Growth Questions by Stipendiary Ministers**

	Not possible to discern	A retrograde change	No change	A slight positive change	A moderate positive change	A significant positive change	Did not answer
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Relationships (with God, self, others)	4	2	6	35	35	14	5
Discernment of what might be 'of God' in life (awareness of blessings, invitations, calls, challenges)	4	1	9	38	32	10	5
Faithfulness to the paschal mystery (self-giving, sacrifice)	4	2	22	38	23	6	5

## Numerical Growth

‘To what extent have the following changed over the past 24 months?’

**Table 7. Responses to EMS13 Numerical Growth Questions by Stipendiary Ministers**

	Significantly decreased	Slightly decreased	No change	Slightly increased	Significantly increased	Did not answer
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Weekly attendance	1	16	20	46	10	6
New vocations	1	1	50	34	8	6
Discipleship	0	2	30	54	7	7
Weddings	3	13	41	27	9	8
Baptisms	2	9	34	34	14	7
Funerals	4	13	43	24	8	7

### CGRP data:

“During the past five years, has the number of people who attend for worship at least monthly declined or grown?” and objective data 2001/2 - 2010/11

CGRP	Declined substantially	Declined a little	Stayed about the same	Grown a little	Grown substantially
Self-reported (last five years)	6	20	19	39	17
Objectively measured (last 10 years)	16	20	37	10	16

## Predicting growth:

- ✓ EMSI3 growth measures are inter-related: growth in one area supports growth in another
- ✓ EMSI3 finds consistent support for the **running of nurture courses**, receipt of **feedback** and the perception of a **strong and clear calling** as predictors of growth measures.
- ✓ EMSI3 findings to some degree supports the findings of CGRP that age is negatively related to attendance growth and also that certain 'positive' clergy personality features are related to growth, particularly those more proactive and likely to engage in 'role crafting'.

## Additional findings on growth:

- ✓ Leadership development programmes (modestly) linked to growth
- ✓ Weddings Project linked to growth (but not in weddings!)
- ✓ Type of nurture course not found to affect their overall positive effect on growth

## Additional findings on amalgamations:

- ✓ 3P project broadly supports a potential for negative impact on growth

## Methodological Issues:

### 1. How should 'growth' be conceptualised and measured in the future?

- Dimensionality
- Validity and reliability
- Objective vs. subjective
- Measurement: Who? How? When?

### 2. Time, change and causation

- If we want to understand the causes of growth/decline, we need to take measurements of (change in) likely IVs prior to (change in) the DVs
- Time lag: How long does it take to stop decline and/or influence growth?
- What are the temporal patterns of growth and decline?