



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NOTRE DAME
A U S T R A L I A

Media Release

Wednesday 18 March 2026

Notre Dame's Professor Stephen Bullivant presents Latin Mass research to Pope Leo XIV in private meeting

Notre Dame [Professor Stephen Bullivant](#) has been granted the honour of a private audience with Pope Leo XIV to discuss his research into American congregations who are committed to the Traditional Latin Mass (or 'Extraordinary Form').

Professor Bullivant, and his research collaborator, Dr Stephen Cranney, from the Catholic University of America, met with Pope Leo earlier this month.

Professor Bullivant and Dr Cranney are co-authors of *Trads: Latin Mass Catholics in the United States*. Expected to be one of the most comprehensive sociological studies to date of American Catholics attached to the Traditional Latin Mass, it is scheduled to be published by Oxford University Press in November 2026.

In a 2024 [article](#), Professor Bullivant and Dr Cranney noted the lack of reliable data on Traditional Latin Mass communities and questioned assumptions of their hostility to Vatican II.

A later survey undertaken by the researchers found nearly two-thirds of respondents accepted the Council's teachings to some degree, with only a small minority rejecting them outright. The study also found high adherence to Church teaching on the Eucharist, broad support for the Pope's authority, and a prevalence of conservative moral attitudes.

The meeting has attracted attention as Pope Leo XIV continues to consult widely on questions surrounding the Traditional Latin Mass.

Since his election, the Pope has maintained the disciplinary framework introduced by Pope Francis in 2021 while engaging in dialogue with a broad range of voices.

An academic in the University's School of Philosophy and Theology since 2021, Professor Bullivant is internationally recognised for his empirical research into Catholic belief, practice and disaffiliation and is a prominent public commentator and contributor to contemporary Catholic debates.

He and Notre Dame colleague [Dr Shaun Blanchard](#) are co-authors of *Vatican II: A Very Short Introduction*, published by Oxford University Press in 2023.

-ENDS-

For media enquiries, please contact:

Email: media@nd.edu.au

Phone: +61 437 992 984

Visit us online for more [Notre Dame News](#).

[in](#)  [f](#)
