



PM GLYNN
INSTITUTE

The Greg Craven Lecture on Ethics and Politics

Understanding secularization in the census



According to the 2021 census, the proportion of Australians who now identify themselves as ‘Christian’ has dropped below 50 percent for the first time. Meanwhile, respondents identifying as “non-religious” has now reached the 39 percent mark – almost double the percentage only 10 years ago.

These shifting religious coordinates are especially striking in a nation whose first census, in 1911, revealed that 96 percent of its people considered themselves ‘Christian’. Even so, the same dramatic conjuncture of rising irreligiosity and declining churches has become characteristic across all the nations of the West.

What is happening here? In this Craven Lecture, Mary Eberstadt – Panula Chair in Christian Culture at the Catholic Information Centre in Washington, D.C., and Senior Fellow at the Faith and Reason Institute – examines in detail the social and historical variables contributing to Western godlessness. Using up-to-the-minute evidence from Australia and elsewhere, alongside her book *How the West Really Lost God*, she advances a new theory of religious decline. The falloff in organised religion, she argues, has more than one cause, but none is as explanatory as the one

most often overlooked, the effect of familial shrinkage and dissolution on transmission of the faith.

Join us for dinner to hear Mrs Eberstadt discuss the waxing and waning religious backdrop that continues to shape Australia and the West, and her thoughts on why it matters vitally to the future.

Date

Wednesday 26 October 2022

Time

6.30pm for dinner at 7pm

Venue

Catholic Leadership Centre
576 Victoria Parade
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Disclaimer (July 2022): Information correct at time of printing. The university reserves the right to amend, cancel or otherwise modify the content without notice.