

## Status Animarum

---

A *Status Animarum* (state of souls) is a parish census initiated by Pope Paul V in the “Rituale Romanum” of 1614. Its purpose is to identify parishioners to help the clergy know their flock.

In accordance with church regulations, a *Status Animarum* was to be performed annually during Christmas to include names and surnames of people in a particular family; age and degree of kinship of its members; name, surname and age of unrelated co-residents; information regarding their accession to communion and confirmations; notes on change of residence and other facts.

Despite the obligation, most parish clergy avoided creating them until the mid-18th century at which time the education of the clergy, particularly for rural parishes, improved significantly.

---