



Diocese of Port Pirie Chancery

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Circular to Diocesan Leadership Personnel (4/16)

Dear Brothers & Sisters

Monument for the Jubilee Year of Mercy Proposed by Pope Francis

The Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting held on Saturday 30th April 30th in Port Pirie, addressed the Pope's call for a Memorial for the Year of Mercy: What memorial would we create? What collaborative action would we take? It was acknowledged that across the diocese the good works of mercy and services to the poor are here in abundance, and in many cases new projects are already underway. After considering several options, the project below, proposed by Sr Anne Foale RSM, was taken up enthusiastically:

'A merciful response to the cry of the earth'

In the spirit of Caring for our Common Home (Laudato Si), as well as 'hearing the cry of the poor' we should also 'hear the cry of earth' (Laudato Si #49). We could make this effort to redress the destruction of habitat that continues to drastically reduce plant and animal diversity within our eco-system.

Parishes, church agencies, schools, communities, families ... within the diocese are invited to plant a tree or trees (or an avenue or a wood-lock) as a Memorial of the Year of Mercy. An invitation is issued to select a tree or trees appropriate to your local area, select and prepare a site and have enough persons to ensure it is nurtured/watered until it is established over this autumn and winter period and especially during summers for 2-3 years. The idea is to have community involvement and for it not to be left to the parish priest to ensure the survival of the tree for instance! There are sure to be expert gardeners to give advice.

In adopting this project, we recall that a similar planting initiative took place in preparation for World Youth Day in Sydney in 2008. An avenue of trees was planted on John and Geraldine Slattery's property at Narridy and as you can see some of the trees are still thriving.



By September 24th, the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, the patron of the Sisters of Mercy, a liturgy to mark the tree planting could be conducted to mark the Memorial planting for the Jubilee Year of Mercy. By then the tree/trees should be exhibiting a degree of established independence.

Further information is attached to this email and is available on the diocesan web site www.pp.catholic.org.au

Yours in Christ



+ Gregory O'Kelly SJ
Bishop of the Diocese of Port Pirie