



# Diocese of Port Pirie

## Chancery

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15th March 2013  
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### Circular to Diocesan Leadership Personnel

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Dear Brothers & Sisters

#### Concerning Election of Pope Francis

Once again the intense media interest in the election of the new Pope shows that the Church still has a major role as a community of significance for the wider world. In a time when abuses in the Church have dominated its portrayal in the media, the coverage given to Pope Benedict and now to his successor Francis shows well that for many, even beyond the Catholic community, the Church remains a sign of hope and promise.

May the gentle St Francis of Assisi, with his total focus on Christ, and his praise of God in all things, and his association with the lowly and the poor, remain a constant inspiration and hope for our new Pope who has taken his name.

As the Archbishop of a bustling, modern, Western super city Pope Francis knows well the challenges facing our Western Church of the twenty-first century. Remember also that he has lived through the era of Eva Peron, and then the Junta of the Colonels, with their “dirty war” of abduction and murder, and the “mothers of the missing” staging their extraordinarily powerful weekly protests. As Provincial of the Jesuits he had to deal with the disappearance and presumed murder of some of his priests known for their opposition to the regime. And out of all of this, it is always the poor and homeless who suffer most, and hence his efforts to identify with them as Archbishop.

There is Francis of Assisi who gave his life to try to live Christ fully. There is also Francis Xavier, one of the first Jesuits, who took the Word of God to what for Europeans were then New Worlds. We have the new worlds of formative influence through cyberspace and a possible extraordinary connectedness. May Pope Francis turn to this world too.

The Vatican needs much reform in issues of style and governance. May Pope Francis have the strength and determination to go against any tide that would seek to resist good change. May he help the collegial come again into the Church.

Speaking of the media and wide interest in this event, yesterday I was inundated with phone calls and messages, all of them congratulatory and hopeful. I was frequently targeted as “the only Jesuit Bishop in Australia” including an interview on the BBC! I received sixty-nine text messages on the mobile, twenty-six voicemails, a similar number of emails and many

straight phone calls. There were twelve radio interviews, going mainly to the regional areas of several States, and a television interview for the principal channels in SA. The Jesuit schools and parishes in Adelaide received significant attention, and I presume Sevenhill was not left alone.

We must pray for our new Pope that he may be able to live up to many of the expectations; one feels for him when considering the breadth and scope.

Mgr Frank Cresp suggested I have a badge made, with the text "I am a Jesuit too"!!

I must assure you, my brothers and sisters of the diocese, that there is yet no hotline set up between Francis the 1<sup>st</sup> and Gregory the 0<sup>th</sup>!

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "+ Gregory O'Kelly SJ". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a cross at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail at the end.

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

