

Minutes of the Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting
Saturday 11 May, 2013
Conference Room, The Bishop's Chancery, Port Pirie

Starting Time: 10.00am for 10.15am

Finishing Time: 3.00pm

President: Bishop Greg O'Kelly

Chair: Genevieve Richter

Present: Julie Andriessen (proxy for Mark Stanley), Fr Steve Ardill, Kevin Baxter, John Beech, Keith Colyer, Fr Paul Crotty, Frank Fahy, Denice Fetherstonhaugh, Brian Fogarty, Julie Hannan, Jackie Hayes, Fr Khalid Marogi, Kathy McEvoy, Fr Adrian Noonan, Michael Preece, Mgr Paul Quirk, Steven Royals, Jill Taylor, Roly Telfer, Sr Sonia Wagner, Sr Elizabeth Young,



Apologies: Sr Anne Foale, Sr Kerry Keenan, Fr Brian Mathews, Peter Munn, Mark Stanley.

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Genevieve Richter, as Chair, welcomed members to the first meeting of the reconfigured Diocesan Pastoral Council.

2. Prayer: *A New Daybreak in Mission*

3. Pope Francis I and the Call to Mission.

The Council viewed a power point presentation that featured aspects of Pope Francis' call to mission to the universal church. This included:

- **MOTTO**
Miserando atque eligendo - lowly and chosen.
- **MISSION**
The Church's Mission of Evangelisation: Proclaim Jesus with your lives, then the Church becomes "mother, not the babysitter."
"Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words." Francis of Assisi
 The Church must come out of herself and go to the peripheries.

- **INCLUSION**
“I give my blessing to all people of goodwill in the world”.
“The Church must do everything we can do to make sure that everyone feels welcome, respected and cared for”

- **ACTION**
“Now let’s start working together, walking together in the Church of Rome.”

- **SPIRITUALITY**
Suscipe. St. Ignatius of Loyola

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.

You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.

Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.

- **POVERTY**
St Francis of Assisi “a man of poverty and a man of peace”.
“How I would like a poor Church for the poor!”

A few of Pope Francis’ Favourite Things

- Favourite music: Leonore Overture No 3 by Ludwig van Beethoven
- Favourite dance style: Tango
- Favourite Movie: Babette’s Feast
- Things he would rescue in event of a fire: Breviary and Address Book
- Favourite Painting: The White Crucifixion by Marc Chagall
- Favourite mode of transport: the bus because that way I can look outside.
- Favourite Virtue: Love. To make room for others with a gentle approach.
- Favourite person: Grandmother Rosa
- Favourite way to stay informed: Newspapers
- Favourite sport: Soccer
- Favourite pastime: Reading and listening to music
- Favourite Saint: St Therese of Lisieux. “When I have a problem I ask the saint, not to solve it, but to take it in her hands and help me accept it.”

4. **The Diocese and a Focus on the Regions:** The video welcome message that Bishop Greg recorded for the first meetings of the Regional Councils was screened. Bishop Greg stressed the importance of the *local church/family church* and the significance of *Baptismal Ministry* in the life and mission of the Church. Bishop Greg spoke of the changing demographics in the diocese and the need to support, encourage and affirm the Baptismal call to mission of the laity.

He stressed that even if we had sufficient numbers of priests and religious ministering in our diocese, we would still be embarking on this pathway. There is a tendency to expect the Bishop to have a plan and a vision for change and to go ahead and implement it. The question is 'How to best serve our people pastorally in light of the significant changes that we are experiencing?' Rather, Bishop Greg hopes that through this Regional/ Diocesan approach there will be opportunity to face our reality and our uncertain future together with hope, courage and imagination. The vision, the work of the Spirit, will rise up from the local Church communities and will not be imposed. We are the People of God and the Mission is God's work. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that the mission has a Church, rather than the Church has a mission. This approach calls us to genuine collaboration and prayerful discernment.



Regional Councils. Sr Sonia, referring to the document – The Regional Pastoral Council Meetings in the Diocese of Port Pirie - retraced the steps that have been taken in bringing together a reconfigured Diocesan Pastoral Council, one that gives prominence to representation from the Regions together with leaders from the various sectors of the diocese – Catholic Education, Centacare, Aged Care, St V De Paul, CWL, Prison Ministry, Aboriginal Ministry, Youth Ministry, Religious Congregations.

Rather than attempt to pay attention to all 7 Strategic Directions at once, the decision was taken, after Regional discussion, to focus for pastoral action on: No 5. Young People and No 6 Faith Development – as being highly significant. In each area there are signs of vibrant life and energy. In each area there are also concerns to be addressed. Taking a positive, appreciative approach, regional members of the Council had the pre-meeting task of identifying and reflecting upon the 'lighthouse' people, events and programs in their region.

Regional Group Discussion. Regional groups and a group gathered with the Bishop met to discuss the following questions:

Considering the two Strategic Directions – Young people and Faith Development – and the Lighthouses identified in the Regions of the Diocese:

1. What gives you **HOPE**?
2. What **CONCERNS** you?
3. What **PASTORAL ACTION** do you suggest in your Region/Area.
Complete the sentence ... **WOULDN'T IT BE GOOD IF.....?**



Report back to the plenary from the Regional Groups and Bishop's Group follows:

1. What gives you Hope?

Bishop's Group

Great enthusiasm in social justice areas
 Encouraged to think and question
 Being part of events which are aligned with current issues particularly social justice.
 Young people eager to learn and ask questions.
 Compassion for those less fortunate
 Fifty young people in YCS in the diocese.

Riverland Region

Catholic Schools – vehicle for Faith formation.
 Efforts to engage young in parish life – e.g. liturgical ministries e.g. altar serving, children's liturgy.
 Young role models – e.g. Hannah
 Gail Page – outreach to students not in Catholic Schools

Northern Region

The new Pope – down to earth – a people's Pope
 Bishop's support, especially with the disadvantaged – Prisoners and Aboriginals
 Father Paul Crotty in our Parish – has introduced different expressions of devotion
 Nice to feel being part of a Diocese – a larger community – not just a small individual parish church
 Lots of other nationalities joining the Churches in Port Augusta and Roxby Downs
 Work being done with young people in the Region (Sister Eliz's work)
 World Youth Day 10 participants going to Rio
 Vocations increasing in other state

Cathedral Region

The small signs, lighthouses, action that is taking place.
 Crystal Brook a great sign of community.
 Appreciate the communities within the community.
 The School Principals.

The Western Region

New Youth Mass well received and supported
 Number of young families attending Mass on a regular basis
 Project Compassion response of school students to needs (social justice)
 Faith development through the schools (Mon-Fri)
 Voluntary and committed lay people in the parishes
 Provision of opportunity for people to develop their faith
 Leadership at local level – informal and lay driven
 Support ministry for Prisons – writing to prisoners, starting teams in parishes.

2. What concerns you?**Bishop's Group**

Lack of support or a frittering away of support after kids leave school.
 Families who may feel ostracised by the church and so do not regularly participate in the church community and go to Mass.

Riverland Region

How to engage Catholic teachers in parish life
 How to enhance the faith in the home – the domestic church
 Where there is no Catholic High school connection with Catholic students is lacking

Northern Region

Lack of young families and youth in our church communities
 People actually living the Catholic Faith – not just coming to church on Sunday and my duty is done

Cathedral Region

That we focus on Sunday Mass. Let's focus on Mass whenever it is – community Mass. People have communities. Choices are made and sport is very important.
 How do we build community?
 How do we get people back?
 Priests need to hand over to the community.

Western Region

Lack of active parishioners between 10-50 years old.
 Dwindling population and inability to deal with the change of culture that has formed and supported in the past.
 Apathy and inactive Catholics
 Lack of faith development in the families
 R.E. in Catholic School is strong but there is a lack of flow through and connection with the family and local parish community.



3. Wouldn't it be good if ...

Bishop's Group

- Young mothers' groups could be mentored by CWL (develop community and faith development)
- Expand linkages between schools and the wider community e.g. Aged Care
- Get our act together to further encourage and support those in YCS.

Riverland Region

- The example of the few was contagious?
- We could inspire more of our catholic teachers and other young people and families to live their faith with enthusiasm in the parish?

Northern Region

- We could develop a better faith community amongst young people and young families in their faith journey.
- We could develop a better culture supportive of Christian values – instead of all the violence

Cathedral Region

We could instill in people a sense of community and a family of love (from our Baptism) by:

- Making Baptism important
- Allowing us to experience God's family at times other than Sunday
- Get confidence again – faith formation
- Experience God's love in a personal way

Western Region

- Links could be developed between larger and smaller communities – get to know each other – develop trust – share resources.
- **Pt Pirie Diocesan Mass for inactive Catholics.** (Proposal from Kevin Baxter, Cleve)
Background: At our recent area meeting of our Western Region Council there was discussion about the Catholics who for whatever reasons are not attending mass. It was noted that most were under the age of 40 to 50 with young families.

My proposal: A “welcome back’ or “come and see Jesus” (name to be decided) mass with some sort of local flavour. i.e. shared meal at lunch or tea after mass? When? Perhaps a common weekend for the entire Diocese? This could then lead to one on one informal meetings or discussions with the local parish priest or team for those Catholics with “issues” either past or present. Done in a non- threatening and welcoming presence this could lead the way for the return of some Catholics. There could be “give ways” of approved Diocesan materials on a take home basis for those interested. i.e.: cd’s, dvd’s books, pamphlets etc.

How? Letter, phone call, personal visit or whatever the local Parish team deems appropriate to those invited. Outcome? A chance to help bring back those who are not attending mass.

Regional Expo: At the next Diocesan Assembly suggest having a session to open the Assembly on the first afternoon that is called a ‘Regional Expo’ to focus on the Regions and highlight the good things that are happening in each region. There could be displays, available local resources to share/sell and speakers.

Discussion in the larger group, following the regional feedback, raised matters such as:

- Concern about those who still consider themselves Catholic but do not come to church.
- An attitude change needed - from obligation and the duty to earn God’s love to growing in trust and personal commitment and responding to the unconditional love of God.
- Concern about those who feel excluded from the church through irregular marriage situations, divorce ...
- Sacramental concern: Not knowing the rules and procedures required in approaching the church at the time of celebration of sacraments and lack of hospitality.
- The need to search out ways to invite people to church and make them feel welcome. Need not always be to Mass.
- Thinking of ways to ‘go out’ to those distanced from the church.
- Issuing invitations, developing relationships, mentoring groups and individuals – in the spirit of the RCIA.
- Paying attention to the naturally formed communities and the communities within the community.
- The importance of the role of the person who is gatherer – for prayer, for celebration, hospitality.
- Getting better at community building in ways that fit for the particular parish.
- Lack of a foundation for the faith for younger generations today. There is no ‘badge of honour’ in being Catholic as there was in the past.
- Let’s focus on MISSION.
- Pope Francis gives us great hope – there is a clear and authentic call to be Church on Mission that is God’s mission.

5. Baptismal Ministry and Lay Leadership in our diocese. Reading time on the *attached Discussion Starter* preceded a consideration of the present reality, needs and possibilities for pastoral service of the people of our diocese. The following section of the document was highlighted as a possible charter for our diocesan directions involving DPCs and RPCs.

“Close collaboration and the coordination of all the apostolic works under the direction of the bishop should be promoted in the diocese as a whole or in parts of it.

Thus all undertakings and organizations, whether their object be catechetical, missionary, charitable, social, family, educational, or any other pastoral end, will act together in harmony, and the unity of the diocese will be more closely demonstrated ... the forms of the (lay) apostolate should be duly adapted to the needs of the times, taking into account the human conditions, not merely spiritual and moral but also social, demographic and economic.” From Christus Dominus.

Blessing and Commissioning. Discussion took place around the importance of giving recognition to the many lay volunteers who are currently ministering throughout our diocese with great generosity. It was agreed that there is precedent and possibility to bless and commission these people. Members of the DPC are encouraged to assist in identifying such women and men. Regional commissioning could be arranged.

Sacramental Preparation. Strong support was given to the suggestion to offer sacramental preparation programs, commencing with the sacrament of Baptism and to conduct these from a regional base.

Parish Packages. The need was raised for there to be assistance given to isolated parishes for sacramental preparation. One suggestion was to compile packages to be sent out and distance support and guidance given. Is there an opportunity for regional support and cooperation here?

Collaboration for leadership Formation. The question of collaboration for leadership formation across the various sectors e.g. Centacare, Catholic Education, Aged Care and the Parishes was raised for discussion. This possibility will be further explored in a meeting between leaders in these areas.

6.Resources/Possibilities: What can be shared? What can we plan together?

Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Sister Elizabeth distributed a copy of the Vision Statement for the ministry to all members and spoke to the meeting about Youth Ministry plans and directions. Youth and Young Adult Ministry is occurring in our diocese at a number of levels:

- Parish (parish youth representatives, Pint with a Purpose, Youth Mass, etc.)
- Diocese (weekly youth e-news, website, Diocesan Youth Assembly 2014, etc.)
- National (Australian Catholic Youth Festival December 5-7 2013)
- International (World Youth Day in Rio de Janeiro July 2013)

Appreciation was expressed for Sr Elizabeth’s work and the fruit it is bearing throughout the diocese. Members of the Council were urged to keep in contact with Sister Elizabeth, promoting and supporting initiatives and sharing hopes and concerns.

Diocesan Support Resources for Regions. Sister Sonia outlined offerings and possibilities.

(i) **The Diocesan website** www.pp.catholic.org.au

(ii) **Spirituality, Reflection Days, Retreats, Scripture study**

- Sevenhill Centre of Ignatian Spirituality – Retreat, prayer and accompaniment opportunities either at Sevenhill or in your own parish.
- Fr Richard Shortall SJ – Retreat in Daily Life – in your region

- eConferences: Next live eConference on Gospel of Mark on Thursday 16 May 2013. Selected sessions from previous eConferences can be offered in the parish.
- The Alpha Program currently being run in Port Pirie.
- Other options upon request

(iii) Practical Pastoral Ministry Workshops

- Regional Workshops on *The Sacrament of Baptism: Pre and Post Baptism and the formation of Baptismal Teams*.
- Formation for Lectors and Special Ministers of the Eucharist
- The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults
- Other options upon request

(iv) Education for Baptismal Ministry: A recommended Pathway

The Broken Bay Institute offers a wide range of opportunities in Adult Faith Development and a rich suite of theological degree programs in partnership with the University of Newcastle. These can be easily and affordably accessed online with the added possibility of local group meetings and support. <http://www.bbi.catholic.edu.au/>

Information regarding these diocesan offerings will be circulated through your Regional Council as arrangements are finalized. If any region or parish is interested in taking up any of the options mentioned, or wants to request an alternative, could you please contact your Regional DPC representative or contact Sr Sonia: ph: 0419 412 687 or 8632 0556 , SrSonia.Wagner@pp.catholic.org.au

Some helpful websites recommended:

Vatican News: www.news.va

Holy See Press: http://www.vatican.va/news_services/

Catholic Answers: <http://www.catholic.com/>

7. The Year of Grace/Year of Faith. Recalling the appeal of Pope John Paul II to 'start afresh with Christ' and 'contemplate the face of Christ' the Catholic Bishops of Australia invited the nation to join them in the celebration of a Year of Grace. A national resource has been produced with images all sourced from the Australian church. Chapter 6 of the DVD *Contemplate the Face of Christ - I am the Alpha and the Omega* which opens with the Port Pirie diocesan image, was screened.

The Council was introduced to the planned National Celebration to close the Year of Grace and the year of Faith: ***The Face of Jesus: The Faces we know*** to be held on the feast of All Saints 1 Nov and encouraged to circulate the attached document through Parish Councils, parishes, schools, agencies, groups and organisations. Material will be produced from both the National and the Diocesan team to assist preparations at local level.



8.Open Forum.

After a short time of personal reflection, members offered closing comments.

- We have been ‘inward looking’ today. Pope Francis has called us to come out of ourselves and to go to the peripheries.
- A lengthy discussion about the Royal Commission occurred. Bishop Greg responded to questions with up to date information and insightful comment from his position as Bishop and also from the recent experience of the national meeting of the ACBC, calling us to honesty, compassion and sensitivity.
- Let us continue to ‘look for the flowers’ and identify, share and celebrate the ‘lighthouses’ of our richly gifted diocese.
- A request was made for a Diocesan Certificate of Recognition for an elderly parishioner. The matter of appreciation and recognition was discussed and it was agreed that an approach should be made to the Bishop through the Parish priest/Parish Council.
- It has been great to experience the richness and diversity of our diocese and to experience the desire to work together and support each other.
- ‘The diocese has reduced in size for me today’. ‘We are all on the same page.’

Resignation of Kathy McEvoy. Bishop Greg spoke in recognition of the inspirational leadership and faithful service that Kathy McEvoy has given to the diocese as Director of Catholic Education over the last ten years. This was Kathy’s last Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting as she has resigned from her Director’s role and will finish in July.

Clarification of the Role of the RPC/DPC and the delegates. A Draft Action Sheet was distributed to the Council, outlining approaches and next steps as follows:

DIOCESAN APPROACHES

- Find out what is happening & working well: Identify, celebrate, share.
- Listen to the voices of concern
- Work in partnership: Parish, Schools, Centacare, St V De P, Youth Ministry
- Be in tune with the seasons and feasts of the Church's Year

NEXT STEPS IN THE REGIONS

- Plan for next meeting of RPC
- Ensure DPC proxy appointed for Region
- Invite former members of the DPC to be involved in Regional Pastoral Council
- Form a core group from RPC to organise meetings and drive agenda
- Appoint a co-chair
- Promote 1 November celebration of: *The Face of Jesus, The Faces We Know.*
- Promote 5-7 December Australian Catholic Youth Festival
- Connect with Sr Elizabeth and Sr Sonia in regard to the Strategic Directions – Young People and Faith Development.
- Make use of the diocesan website www.pp.catholic.org.au to foster communication in the region.

Blessing and Commissioning:

The meeting concluded with a prayer of blessing and commissioning in which Bishop Greg invited the Council members to pray for him before he prayed for us. A copy of the Strategic Directions was presented to each Councillor.

The meeting concluded at 3.00pm.

Next meeting: Saturday 9 November 2013. 10.00am-3.00pm