

DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL: DIOCESE OF PORT PIRIE

Theme: The Church a Home for All

MINUTES

Saturday 9 November 2013

Time: 9.45am for 10.00am start

Finish: 3.00pm

Venue: Conference Room in O'Reily House, 105 Gertrude Street, Port Pirie.

Present: Fr Steve Ardill, Kevin Baxter, John Beech, Keith Colyer, Frank Fahy, Denice Fetherstonehaugh, Sr Anne Foale, Brenda Keenan, Sr Kerry Keenan, Julie Hannan, Jackie Hayes, Fr Khalid Marogi, Fr Adrian Noonan, Dr Peter Munn, Bishop Greg O'Kelly SJ, Michael Preece, Mgr Paul Quirk, Genevieve Richter, Steven Royals, Roly Telfer, Gary Stokes, Nita Stokes, Sr Sonia Wagner, Sr Elizabeth Young.

Apologies: Fr Paul Crotty, Brian Fogarty, Fr Brian Mathews, Jill Taylor.

1. Welcome and Introductions:

Genevieve Richter, as Chair, welcomed members to the second meeting of the year. She gave a special welcome to Brenda Keenan, the new Director of Catholic Education. She noted the resignation of Mark Stanley (Ceduna, Western Region).

ACTION: Elect a regional representative to replace Mark Stanley in the Western Region – Fr Brian Mathews and Western Region RPC at next meeting on Wed 26 March at Wudinna.

2. Prayer: Reflections by Deacon Gary and Nita Stokes and Peter Munn on pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Song: *Open our eyes, Lord.*

3. Sharing from the Regions:

Key Issues

Cathedral: It is difficult with small and aging communities; waiting for leaders to put up their hands? Life experiences are taking young ones out of the community. This leads to a 'disappearing faith'. On the 29th Nov, there will be a gathering of invited leaders of the church communities of Red Hill parish (Red Hill, Snowtown, Bute, Port Broughton) and Crystal Brook, to be held at Redhill with a BBQ tea. The aim is to launch a local 'Year of Hope' and to explore options for promoting a sense of the larger faith community. Alpha will be introduced as one option that is 'tried and true' and information will be given about the program to be offered at Crystal Brook in early 2014.

Riverland: Continuing journey to formation of the cluster of communities in the Our Lady of the Riverland parish. Launch of Our Lady of the Riverland parish – there will be a prayer to be prayed at all Masses and a decree initiating a day to celebrate. Already forming (across towns), a parish finance committee, a parish business manager, teams for liturgy, pastoral care, property and buildings, youth and families.

Western: The tyranny of distance. The decline in priestly vocations. The ability and capacity of priests given the large areas they cover. The declining numbers at Mass. The impact of the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse. They would like to hear Francis Sullivan talking about this to people in the Region.

Northern: They met at Caritas College with webEx (Roxby Downs and Coober Pedy) and telephone (Quorn). Main issue – the distance and isolation of northern neighbours. In this Region, it is definitely not 'one size fits all'. There are small aging communities. Roxby Downs is progressing with a site for its church. Catholic Women's League SA is 100 years old in 2014, and a celebration will be held in Quorn.

Other comments

WebEx quality in regional areas is often patchy; teleconferences are often a better solution.

ACTION: Continue to monitor and explore improved video/teleconferencing possibilities for our Diocese:
Dale Fricker

Francis Sullivan will be speaking in Adelaide and will be available on WebEx in schools with the facilities. It will also be videoed and that will be made available.

ACTION: Explore opportunities for our diocese to hear Francis Sullivan speak – Sr Sonia

Addressing Strategic Directions 5 and 6 – Young People and Faith Development

Cathedral: We rely on schools to educate and form young people in faith. A positive event has been Pint with a Purpose. For faith development, Alpha in Port Pirie went very well. It will be offered in Crystal Brook next year and later in the year again in Port Pirie. The challenge – after Alpha, what comes next? Frank Fahy runs a weekly scripture education group. It has moved to the new Christian bookshop in a central location. There are ecumenical possibilities and involvements. Next year in Port Pirie, Retreat in Daily Life will be offered during Lent. Fred's Van will be starting on the 16th Feb in Port Pirie; it will involve many younger people and other Christian denominations.

Riverland: 7 people from the Riverland will be attending the Australian Catholic Youth Festival and the parishes are supporting financially. There are draft guidelines for financially contributing to faith formation activities. It is hard to get parents to bring children to Mass on Sunday. A few parents are very active with sacramental programs and children's liturgy. The altar servers are increasing. Many children attended the parish picnic on the Murray River. There was World Youth Day involvement from the Riverland. In schools there is a renewed focus on sacramental preparation.

Would like to see more involvement of priests on school retreats. How can we make liturgies memorable? A new monthly youth-led Mass at Waikerie. New engagement in Waikerie community.

Western: Children's public school workshops, and preparing for sacraments. Children's liturgy at Mass. A parish team works with members who want to participate in RCIA. Youth Mass at Whyalla 3 times a term. A Lenten program in Streaky Bay. Young Vinnies is to start at Streaky Bay. In Port Lincoln there is a successful breakfast after Mass. Looking for people to offer faith development topics on the catechism, etc. Lenten programs and the women's retreat work very well. Service to the sick and aged a positive. The Diocesan website is valuable way of sharing information.

ACTION: Utilise, promote and visit the Diocesan Website www.pp.catholic.org.au – all Regions/parishes in contact with Bernadette Wauchope

Northern: In Port Augusta there is a new Couples for Christ group that formed after a 3 week course. Involvement in the Australian Catholic Youth Festival, World Youth Day, young adult discussion group, Children's liturgy, Broken Bay E-conferences and ecumenical youth group.

Other comments:

- The full set of DVDs of the Broken Bay E-conferences is available at the Diocesan Office.
- We are losing youth, but there are positive things like Fred's Van (high attendance in Port Lincoln), Youth Mass, Parish picnic, the vibrant community in Streaky Bay, altar servers and Religious Instruction.
- We want to share what has been successful and see if we can implement them in other areas. Maybe good to develop a Youth Manual and a Faith Development Manual. These could include initiatives happening in various places and the contacts of those involved. It is hard to communicate these things to smaller parish communities. Can a copy of minutes of this meeting (or a summary of them) be available to all parishioners for communication and education?

ACTION: Develop Manuals around each of the Strategic Directions commencing with SDs – Young People and Faith Development – Sr Elizabeth and team, Sr Sonia and team.

Make DPC Minutes and Summary available to the diocese and on diocesan web site – Sr Sonia, Bernadette Wauchope.

- Bishop Greg noted a deepening prayerfulness in the diocese (mid-north retreat, Alpha, Josephite programs, Retreat in Daily Life for the Riverland, Holy Land pilgrimage, Thuruna retreat, Couples for Christ). They are a cause for hope. Other great times of coming together have been the Diocesan Leadership Conference, Diocesan Assembly, Diocesan Pastoral Council, Riverland Forum, Regional Councils and the parish events to celebrate the Good Samaritan Sisters leaving Whyalla.

ACTION: Continue to promote, learn from and build on the good things that are happening – all Regions/Parishes, according to need and capacity.

4 . Reflection: Pope Francis and his vision of the Church:

Via a power point presentation, Council reflected on images and words of Pope Francis that convey his vision of Church as:

- Church as Reconciler
- Church as Home of All
- Church of the Heart
- Church with a simple message
- Church of Emmaus

ACTION: Make powerpoint available on the web site – Bernadette Wauchope

Responses after viewing the Powerpoint on Vision of Church:

- Dialogue with the disillusioned is our experience. How do we talk to those who have left the church, don't go to Mass or don't see religion as important – without being domineering or lecturing?
- Do parents share with their children how much attending Mass means to them? Good example is not enough – engagement, conversation and sharing of faith all needed.
- We have to look at why people don't come to Mass – many have suffered through divorce or are married outside the church. They have lost the faith, but they do not feel welcome. They feel that they do not measure up.
- The staff want to work at Centacare because of the value base in the Catholic faith, but they do not want to take the next step of going to Mass or joining the church.
- Many people are happy to identify as Catholic, believe in God, etc, but do not feel the need to attend Mass.
- A good way to gauge the health of a church is by how many adults come and remain. We need to look at the qualities of our communities and outreach, and invite people to participate.
- Pope Francis has asked for opinions from the Catholic faithful on divorce, contraception, homosexuality, etc.
- As Catholics, everywhere we go we can walk into a Catholic Church and feel at home.
- Often young people will only question the values that predominate in society when they have personal experience of tragedy and suffering.

5. Our Diocese responds to our needs: Discussion and Consultation (see Attachment)

Bishop Greg opened this segment of the meeting by:

- inviting members to consider key quotes from the address of Pope Francis to the Latin American Conference of Bishops 28 July 2013.
- outlining discussions that resulted in the identification of necessary ministry responses to our challenges
- speaking to his Context Statement that sums up the range of challenges facing us and identifies our strengths as a diocese.
- posing the question: Do these FOUR areas cover Necessary Ministry Responses to our Challenges?

Discussion on the Context Statement:

- The Church is engaged in a dialogue with indifference, disillusion and distance.
- What about developing our local faith centres? When it is proposed to close churches in small, diminishing communities, people who don't attend are often most vocal in opposing the change.
- We can't be stagnant, but open to change. We need to prepare parishioners for change.
- People feel they have to jump through so many hoops in order to participate in the formal Church.
- The Aboriginal community has not yet been mentioned.
- We should be providing for people to have a 'peak experience' – experiences of communion. Retreats provide adults with the ability to articulate their faith to their children. People can connect with real experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation, suffering, etc. Opportunities to meet in homes. Meeting people where they are not where we are.
- There has been much hurt generated from mixed marriages having to be performed in the sacristy in the past.
- In prison ministry, prayer and Mass can happen anywhere where people gather.
- Lay discernment is important, but also discernment of Bishop and priests. How can all the Baptised discern the call to mission of the local church, together, not in separate groups? There is a culture among the laity of getting permission rather than being proactive and discerning.
- Oppressed people find that it costs when they try to speak up, stand up and take initiative.
- Young people don't have a lived experience of church. For youth, the parish is their school. Parents may have had a lived experience, but they are not involved now.
- A lot that is excellent is happening in our schools.
- This diocese is very welcoming. After Mass at most churches in our diocese, people stay behind to talk to one another.
- There has to be a commitment to change across the diocese and a sense of journeying together. However, the nature of the change will differ according to local context, needs and capacities.
- There are various models of Church operating that we perhaps haven't noticed.
- Centacare is a real expression of Church – the Church in action.

Necessary Ministry Responses to Our Challenges

Bishop Greg posed the question: Do these FOUR areas cover Necessary Ministry Responses to our Challenges? Are there others that are *necessary*?

Do you think these structures and forms of ministry engagement should be implemented across the FOUR Regions? Can each parish be committed to these but not alone? It would allow each to identify the gaps and also enhance their capacity to share.

Premise:

No parish can stand alone, but there are lots of little communities, which each have their own identity. Regions can do what individual communities can't. How do we care pastorally for people in parishes? Are there some key areas which are essential and can be shared across parishes?

1. STRUCTURES:

- Linking/clustering of parishes
- Parish Council/Regional Council
- Finance Council
- Other

2. FORMS OF MINISTRY ENGAGEMENT:

- Liturgy Team
- Baptismal Preparation Team
- Bereavement Team
- RCIA/ALPHA
- Pastoral Care Team
- Family-School-Parish partnership Team
- Ecumenical engagement Team
- Social Justice Team
- Children and Young People

3. FORMATION PROGRAM:

- Formation of apostolic teams for each worship centre
- Invitation, preparation, formation, commissioning
- Inservice, networking

4. FORMS OF CLERGY MINISTRY

- Sharing /rotation of priests within a cluster/grouping of parishes
- 'Circuit rider' priest assigned to a number of communities
- The Permanent Diaconate
- Overseas Clergy

Comments:

- Do we know who the Catholics in our communities are? Some larger parishes have started storing and going through the data of Catholics in the area – using the PACS system.
- Liturgy should draw everyone in – it is 'the work of the people'. The source and summit of our faith life, therefore all should be involved.
- Would like to see more use of the media. For example, inform people through the local papers about what is happening – the Witness only reaches the Catholics who participate. How do we advertise church times – are they listed in our papers?
- The Riverland has an information brochure and now a website. There are media people in each of the 5 parish communities. We need to discuss the role of diocesan media officer.
- Communication strategies are a 'fifth ministry'. 48 people a day access the diocesan website. How do we share between the parishes what is working well? Should the diocesan pastoral council have a media officer?

ACTION:

- (i) Add COMMUNICATION as a fifth necessary ministry area – Strategic Directions Group
- (ii) Take discussion about Necessary Ministry Responses to Our Challenges to the Assembly of Priests – Bishop Greg and Vicars
- (iii) Prepare Necessary Ministry Responses to Our Challenges for Regional Pastoral Council Meetings – Strategic Directions Group and Regional Agenda Groups.
- (iv) Explore the feasibility of appointing a Media Officer – Strategic Directions Group
- (v) Organise Cross-Sector (Diocese, CEO, Centacare, Boystown, St VdeP, Aged Care, Aboriginal Ministry, Prison Ministry) Discussion for sharing of resources and opportunities – Peter Munn, Brian Fogarty, Brenda Keenan, Sr Sonia.

6. Diocesan Pastoral Assembly 2014:

Michael Preece introduced the 2014 Assembly and its theme: The Church a Home for All: Welcoming, Healing, Reconciling and Advocating. The Assembly has the goal of highlighting the sharing of gifts and resources across parishes and regions. In 2014 we are moving to focus on Strategic Direction 4 – Reconciliation and Justice. Sr Elizabeth Young shared about the Youth Assembly which will use 4 superheroes to illustrate the 4 sub-themes, with the name 'Justice League of the Diocese.'

The Assembly will start with regional presentations introducing each region through the lens of Strategic Direction No 4. Each Region has 20 minutes to present: this is who we are, what we do and what works well. There will also be a display area in the hall allocated to each region.

Members broke into groups – regional and Bishop's group – to discuss the implications, possibilities and challenges of the Assembly theme for their Region, Parish, School or Agency.

Western: Small communities and the need for reconciliation for past hurts. Clergy placement and succession planning, circuit priests. Aboriginal ministry in Ceduna.

Riverland: Present realities: bookmark to welcome visitors, Grandparents Day, outreach to refugee family, community response to eliminating suicide, Mass for the elderly, advocacy around care for the environment (the lake at Barmera). Future: outreach to Aboriginal community, visitors to Cadell prison.

Northern: Snapshots of remote northern community. Catholic Earthcare 'On Holy Ground', remote community needs, prison ministries, detention centres, Aboriginal ministries, Centacare, Early Learning Centre at Caritas College. Other issues: distance of priests' travelling, motor mission, catering for students not at Catholic schools.

Cathedral: Model of Regional sharing at Redhill/Crystal Brook - to be used in other places. Think about Masses other than Sunday Masses. A newsletter from the parish, getting it out to families in the community.

Bishop's group: Our Church a home for all; the power of story, the opportunity at Assembly for stories. The Church is a home of the Word, of saints, servant of poor, in the Eucharistic bread the giver of life.

7. Baptismal Ministry and Lay Leadership – the Survey:

We now have responses to the survey and the beginnings of a ministry profile for each Region listing the ministries that exist in a parish and a contact person for each.

The aim was firstly, to find out names of the people in ministries so we can communicate with them. Secondly, to connect people in similar ministries from the different parishes in networks if they are interested. Finally, it will allow us to identify gaps in ministry that may be filled by sharing across parishes. There was then discussion among the Regions about their survey lists.

ACTION: Sr Sonia will communicate with the Vicars and the two regional representatives from each Region to update the ministry lists, provide appropriate contact details and develop networks in key ministry areas e.g. Liturgy.

Resources and Possibilities

- Fr Khalid Marogi. An opportunity for Catholic high schools – ask students to develop an app to make information and resources available for the diocese and parishes. It could be a competition.

ACTION: Fr Khalid to develop the proposal and discuss with Brenda Keenan (CEO Director), the Principals of the schools and Dale Fricker.

Sr Elizabeth Young. **A pilgrimage** walk from Wilmington to Port Augusta on Easter Monday. St Mary MacKillop would have travelled this trip when she visited Port Augusta. Fr Khalid and Sr Elizabeth walked it in 9.5 hours this year. It will be a way to connect with faith, especially for young people and those from the northern Region's smaller communities – Quorn, Wilmington, Hawker, etc. **ACTION:** Sr Elizabeth to coordinate event.

- Next year is 50 years of Caritas. We as a diocese have been strong in supporting the organisation and propose to mark this anniversary in a special way.
- Denise Fetherstonehaugh. 100 years of Catholic Women's League. On the 25th Oct next year the celebrations will finish off with the Archbishop and hopefully Bishop Greg in Adelaide. In this diocese they are hoping to celebrate in the different vicariates.
- Request to have a diocesan calendar to go on the website. Give local events to Bernadette Wauchope to put up for everyone's information.

ACTION: Explore possibility of posting Diocesan Calendar – Maryanne Saracino to discuss with Bishop Greg. Bernadette Wauchope to action.

8 . Open Forum – Review/Evaluation:

- It has been very positive to see the initiatives of different Regions, and have an opportunity to present this back to the parish.
- It is good to see the simple things that are making a difference. Many good things happening around the place.
- The meeting was well organised – very good gender balance, process and chair.
- Individuals can feel powerless, but this meeting allows the sharing of vision and receiving of support.
- The Regional model of the Riverland was praised and highlighted, though it was stressed that it is a model *for* the Riverland, other Regions have different contexts.
- Pope Francis is a beacon of hope for the Church.

Bishop's response: This meeting gives confidence and consensus in making decisions and, as a sounding board, gives impetus for going ahead with initiatives. There is a spirit of unity and organisation. We want to see a sense of ownership – that this is *our* Church. Not just in parish councils, but a wider group of people.

Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelisation

This document from Pope Francis invites feedback from the entire Church and encourages local consultation. Bishop Greg would like to develop a process of consultation with people throughout the diocese. A survey using SurveyMonkey was suggested which could be posted to the website.

Keith Colyer. A St Vinnie's Festival meeting will be happening in Port Pirie on the weekend before the Diocesan Assembly, and he is encouraging people to come to both events. The Vinnie's Council meetings will be rotating between different towns of the diocese, on a 2 year rotation. Fred's Van is starting in Port Pirie and in 18 months time the hope is to extend to both Port Augusta and Whyalla.

9. Blessing and Commissioning:

Thank yous were given to Sr Sonia Wagner for preparation, Sr Kerry and Bernadette Wauchope for catering and minutes secretary, Sr Elizabeth Young. Vatican II Prayer. Song: *May the hand of God go with you.*

Diocesan Meetings – 2014

Diocesan Assembly

Tues 8 and Wed 9 April

Diocesan Youth Assembly

Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 March

Diocesan Pastoral Council

Saturday 3 May

Saturday 8 November

Regional Pastoral Councils

RPC Riverland Tuesday 21 January (TBC)

RPC Cathedral Monday 24 February 6.00pm at St Mark's Port Pirie

RPC Northern Thursday 6 March at 5.15pm from Port Augusta WebEx

RPC Western Wednesday 26 March at Wudinna from 10.00am – 2.30pm

Pastoral Associates

Sunday 1 June and Monday 2 June

Sunday 14 September & Monday 15 September

