

## **Thematic Paper 3: Prayerful and Eucharistic**

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The six thematic papers from the discernment and writing groups came out on Pentecost Sunday as promised. Your 'sense of the faithful' committee was pleased to see that many of the nine themes from the joint statement of the 26 Melbourne parishes are included. This suggests that the wisdom of ordinary Catholics had been listened to and put into an 'official' paper.

Let us therefore be optimistic that the Holy Spirit and the Australian Church will work together. All delegates won't agree with each other (no more than all family members agree!) so we need to continue as the papers say 'the journey of discernment toward the Plenary Council'.

In the six papers there is some overlap which helps to emphasise important matters. This article looks at the paper entitled 'Prayerful and Eucharistic?'. Please read the paper available on this website.

### ***Some issues raised***

A renewed emphasis on local communities. page 13: Mandate Diocesan and Parish Pastoral Councils.

There are also clear proposals for changes in the Mass. Page 15

Expedite and implement a review of the current translation of the Missal to promote an expression of prayer that is inclusive and understood by all people.

Implement a revision of the Lectionary that is accessible and considers inclusive language alongside accuracy

Review the dismissal rite (page 17).

This is to encourage members of our Church communities to discern ...ministries of service, justice and ecology

Also recommended is:

train liturgical musicians through sponsorships and scholarships within local dioceses.

Page 14 calls for a return of the third rite. See also page 11 (second last paragraph)

Page 17 calls for a means by which the needs of the disillusioned, wounded, drifting, isolated may be recognised. How can we do this?

Page 16 calls for education in different prayer forms. What does this involve?

Page 16 also speaks of the education of clergy and laity together, as well as education of teachers and parents for sacraments.

### ***Some gaps***

I have highlighted some of the issues raised in this paper. So far so good. Your 'job' (if you so wish) is to encourage and also point out the gaps. Here are some gaps I noted.

The call for third rite needs to be stronger. Page 11 states that many Australian Catholics are calling for it. Do the Bishops need reminding that the vast majority of Catholics have 'voted with their feet' so that the great sacrament of reconciliation is in danger of disappearing?

The call for Diocesan and Parish Councils needs to be more precise to avoid the danger of either body degenerating into a small group of “yes people”. Thus the PC must give clear directions for how they should be formed and how they should work as well as providing ongoing education on their role.

Page 7 states that the pastoral reality is that in many rural and isolated parishes lay men and women lead Sunday liturgies in the absence of a priest.

Meanwhile, some dioceses have amalgamated and clustered parishes, which has not been helpful in nourishing community.

Yes, but this paper doesn't offer any solutions. Here should we not call for the widening of the criteria for priesthood?

All these and other gaps call us to continue the process of discernment towards P C. 2021. The changes this paper calls for may not occur unless we often remind PC delegates of their importance.

Please write to the Plenary Council Secretariat at [plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au](http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au). We would also love to hear from you. This article is not a complete description of this paper. Feel free to add your important comments on any of the above statements.