

Submission to Plenary Council Stage 2
St Kevin's Lower Templestowe

11 November 2019

Dear Sister Clare and Members of the Writing Group,

Eleven members of the Liturgy Team at St Kevin's Parish in Templestowe, Melbourne met and attempted to discern the question: How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is prayerful and Eucharistic?

In our parish, have Wednesday night adoration and a weekly meditation group. However, we are very aware of and we express concern for those who struggle to find the Eucharist meaningful and relevant. The number of people who participate in the Eucharist regularly is low.

While we could blame Sunday sport or weekend shopping, we believe that God is calling us to look at our Eucharistic celebration and make it more accessible to the 21st century mind. As we said in our original submission to the Plenary Council, "the language (of the liturgy) is convoluted and the word for word translation is ineffective in ensuring that the people of God can fully participate in worship. It does need to be a more contemporary celebration.

The Scripture passage of the Road to Emmaus (*Luke 24:30-31*) reminded us of how important the Eucharist is in coming to recognise Jesus. Therefore, our Liturgy Team respectfully suggests that the Plenary Council:

1. puts in place a process, to add a couple of responses to the Eucharistic Prayer, which fit in with the general thrust of the particular Mass (taking them from the responsorial psalm or prayer at start of Mass) This way linking the 2 parts of the Mass.)
2. arranges to have linguistic experts rewrite the three "presidential prayers ".so that they are more relevant and meaningful to contemporary Australians.
3. recommends that all language of liturgy is inclusive. The exclusive use of "brothers, men etc has left us vulnerable to the accusations of being sexist.
4. restores the Third Rite of Reconciliation to encourage a greater participation in this sacrament. The banning of the Third Rite has had the unforeseen consequence of "people voting with their feet" and staying away from all forms of the sacrament. As a result, our people have missed out on the exposure of the consequences of sin to our society as well as to themselves.
5. encourages the use of modern technology to make the liturgy more relevant for our people.
6. encourages school Religious Education Leaders, in conjunction with presiders, to simplify the Mass in form and language when a large proportion of the congregation is children.
7. widens the criteria for priesthood beyond male celibate to at least include "Viri probati" because we are aware of country Dioceses shortage of priests & our own Melbourne diocese is increasingly having to "merge" parishes; often with the consequences of even fewer people coming to Mass.

At the heart of the changes we seek is the belief that, in order to spiritually feed 21st century Australians, the liturgy needs to be accessible and relevant to them. It needs to be expressed in plain, contemporary Australian English, but also it should reflect - in a way that is culturally appropriate for our community- the fundamental Catholic values of inclusiveness, acceptance and dialogue.

Many thanks for your valuable endeavours,

From the St Kevin's Templestowe Liturgy Team

Summary of Workshop, 13th November 2019.

Theme....Inclusive, participatory, synodal.

Group members....Peter Sheehan, Carmel Purdey, Margaret Mangan, Trish Wilson.

We selected 3 ideas from the documents provided...

- 1) Synodality and its importance in church governance.
- 2) Participatory....the inclusion of women, divorced, LBGTIQ...refugees and our indigenous Australians in full Church life.
- 3) Ending clericalism.

Suggestions for actions in these 3 areas

- 1) Synodality.
 - a) Establish and put in place a process of performance review for all Church leaders....Bishops, Priests, Lay leaders, leaders of religious congregations.
 - b) The Plenary Council's composition to be synodal in that the majority of members are diocesan priests, laity, religious brothers and sisters and members of congregational orders, whose views are to be respected and whose vote taken into account.
- 2) Participatory. Develop specific plans for full inclusion in Church life of..
*Women *LBGTIQ *Indigenous Australians * the divorced and remarried
*refugees .
- 3) Ending clericalism. Re-shape the training of priests, including establishing greater involvement in communities outside the seminary experience.
 - a) The re-shaping to include enlarging access to the priesthood by accepting women, married men,(viri probati) , and welcoming back priests who left the priesthood to marry.
 - b) The re shaping to extend to officially discouraging any undue deference given to ordained clergy by some of the laity in ignorance of their rights and responsibilities as baptised Catholics.

Trish Wilson Group Leader

St Kevin's Parish Templestowe
Phase 2 of the Plenary Council Journey
Workshop Week 2: Theme – **A joyful, hope-filled and servant community**

The following is a summary of consideration of the theme **A joyful, hope-filled and servant community** on the evening of Wednesday 20th November 2019. **Note:** *The considerations were made against the suggested changes put forward in the “Plenary Council 2020: Joint Parish Statement”.*

How do we act on the theme: A joyful, hope-filled and servant community?

Change the nature of the Plenary Council

- 3rd of the people need to be lay people – ask Bishops to decide to include more lay people
- Invite members of Bishops' Conference/Plenary Council to visit and listen to the needs of small Community Groups

Encourage an Open and Inclusive Church

- Change/modify Church Laws to include women, the LGBTQI communities and those divorced and re-married

Promote Servant Leadership for a Humble Church

- Education of Church Hierarchy by lay people of the vital work provided by groups within the Church e.g. Vinnies, etc.
- Change in Governance e.g. Parish Councils for all Parishes and Diocesan Councils for all Dioceses

Change the Composition of the Priesthood

- Women priests and married priests – more attuned to the needs of families
- Parents are more attuned to the development of families
- More joyful Communities would result if women priests and married priests were appointed

Renew our Focus on the Poor and Marginalised

- Plenary Council/Bishops' Conference make a statement of support for those Church organisations e.g. Vinnies and Caritas that are providing vital support of the poor and marginalised members of our society
- More encouragement for people to become more involved in Social Justice

Make the Liturgy More Relevant

- Australian Catholic Church should employ a group of people gifted in the English language to re-write the three (3) Penitential Prayers and the Peoples' responses and express them in everyday language

Protect and Restore the Earth

- Australian Catholic Church should establish an Education for Change Group.

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Summary of Workshop ,20th November, 2019.

Theme.....Prayerful and Eucharistic.

Group members....Peter Sheehan, Vianney Shiel, Michael Lynch, Catherine, Trish Wilson.

We selected 3 ideas from the documents provided.

- 1) Restoring the 3rd Rite of Reconciliation.
- 2) Removal of existing moral restrictions on attending the sacraments for certain groups of Catholics.
- 3) Need for more laity involvement in the life of the Church.

Suggestions for action in these 3 areas.

- 1) 3rd Rite of Reconciliation...The Australian Bishops should reverse their earlier decision to remove the Third Rite from the choices available to Catholics. The 3rd Rite should be reinstated.
- 2) Moral restrictions pertaining to the sacraments.....The Plenary Council should decide to remove the current moral restrictions placed on divorced and remarried Catholics and LBGTIQ Catholics which restrict them from participating in relevant sacraments.
- 3) Laity Involvement....Encourage the Australian church authorities to support in principle the ordination of women as deacons and priests.

Trish Wilson Group Leader

Plenary Council 2020

Discernment Phase

How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is: Missionary and evangelising?

Recommended actions:

All bishops show public support in word and action for Catholic organisations who are supporting marginalised individuals and communities including the Indigenous people, victims of abuse, homeless people, LGBTIQ and women.

Build effective prayerful liturgies, that remind local communities of the call to witness to Jesus by actions in their everyday lives (by being an example).