

## **First Assembly of the Plenary Council, Oct 2021**

### **The rough transcript of Open sessions**

#### **Introduction**

This document contains a very rough transcription of the parts of the Plenary Council that were open to public view. If the speaker spoke too fast, or getting the concepts down took longer, quite a lot was missed. Sometimes I was only able to capture the general gist. It is offered as an aid to those doing the ongoing Plenary Council discernment at personal, parish, deanery and diocesan levels. Apologies in advance for the times my own lens got in the way, and for the errors which escaped my notice. The homilies and Mass readings are included because in my experience of these kinds of gatherings, often it is where we get God's guidance clearest, even if, as happened here, the readings - except for 10 Oct - were not from the normal liturgical cycle.

#### **Mass 2pm Sunday 3 Oct 2021, St Mary's Cathedral, Perth**

Welcome to country

Red vestments

Hymn: Gather us in

Deut. Moses said, obey the laws of the Lord your God. This law is not beyond your strength nor beyond your reach

R. Lord You have the words of everlasting life

Psalm: The law of the Lord is perfect...

Phil. If love can persuade at all. Be united. Common purpose, common mind.

John. If you love Me, you will keep My word. It is the word of the One who sent Me. The Holy Spirit will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you.

End of Ch 13, beg. Of Ch 14

Homily, Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB

On 21 Nov 1964 Lumen Gentium released

57 years later, the 2nd Vatican Council remains a touchstone for understanding of life and mission of the Church.

The Lord remains faithful to His promise of guidance through the Holy Spirit.

Fundamental question? What do you say of yourself?

Who do you understand yourself to be church?

In the midst of wind and waves, Jesus says "Take courage, I am with you, there is no need to be afraid."

We are the people of God, on pilgrimage together to our homeland of heaven.

Sign, instrument, of communion with God.

We are on the way, but we are not there yet.

It is only in Christ that the church can be a sacrament of communion and unity.

We must follow the Master.

He is the head of the body which is His Church.

This then is who we are.

Reborn in baptism and United in the Eucharist.

We are a people brought into unity.

He is encouraging us to reflect deeply on what He has called us to be.  
Much of this work is to be done on our knees.  
As Pope Francis said, we must 'Return the church to Christ, and return Christ to the Church.'  
We must learn of the One who is meek and humble of heart.  
Come Holy Spirit.

### **Mass Monday 4 Oct 2021, St Kilian's Bendigo, Sandhurst diocese**

Introduction by Bishop Mackinlay  
Much of the work has to be done on our knees.  
We will stop and pray regularly, especially prior to any votes.  
What is God asking of us in Australia at this time?  
St Francis of Assisi, put himself completely in God's hands, and thus became an extraordinary agent for missionary activity in the Church.  
This location at St Kilian's is in the heart of the goldfields.

Gal. Only boast about the Cross of Christ  
What matters is becoming an altogether new creature.

R. You are my inheritance O Lord.  
Psalm 15. I take refuge in You, You are my God...

Matt: I bless You Father, Lord of heaven and earth...and entrusting these things to mere children.  
I will give you rest, I am gentle and humble of heart.

Homily, Bishop Shane Mackinlay  
3 phrases central to life and mission of St Francis  
He was a privileged kid, but suffered injuries of war,  
Go, Rebuild My Church, which you see is falling down. Much greater mission. Followed Jesus in simplicity and poverty.  
We too are seeking to rebuild Christ's Church, listening to each other, the poor, the earth and the Holy Spirit.  
More missionary Christ-centred Church - plenary council mission.  
Praise Be, canticle of St Francis, praise of God's work of creation. Laudato Si.  
Fratelli Tutti: brothers and sisters all.  
Sowing seeds of peace, ministering to the least of our brothers and sisters.  
Common home, common good.  
Steward's together of God's extraordinary creation, working towards a more missionary, more Christ-centred Church in Australia.

### **Plenary Council livestream general session Monday 4 Oct 2021**

Words of Pope St John Paul II to Aboriginal people, imploring them to preserve culture  
During all this time the spirit of God has been with you

Jesus did not worry about material things,  
cave, walkabout, with nothing, strong in sharing,  
in the Eucharist He shared Himself as nobody else could

Music: To You I give my heart to You, O Lord, You heal my spirit, my soul, my mind, my body

Welcome to country, acknowledgement of elders.

Once we welcome you, we have a duty of care to make sure you are safe and taken care of.

Welcome to all online (past, present and emerging elders)

Peace be upon this house

Chairperson for today's session. (Syriac, Aramaic, Maronite, education, law, Theresa Simon)

Story tellers and deep listeners (first peoples)

to know me is to breathe with me, to listen deeply

is to connect

Sound of deep calling to deep

river people, we cannot hurry the river,

we must understand the river, the current, and work with its ways

we watch our bush foods, and wait for them to open before we gather them

the time for rebirth is now

Rev 2:7 Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.

Becoming a church that listens, where everyone has something to learn, all listening to each other, and listening to the Holy Spirit.

Path of synodality, expected by God of the church of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium

CCC 738

*Thus the Church's mission is not an addition to that of Christ and the Holy Spirit, but is its sacrament: in her whole being and in all her members, the Church is sent to announce, bear witness, make present, and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity (the topic of the next article):*

*All of us who have received one and the same Spirit, that is, the Holy Spirit, are in a sense blended together with one another and with God. For if Christ, together with the Father's and His own Spirit, comes to dwell in each of us, though we are many, still the Spirit is one and undivided. He binds together the spirits of each and every one of us, ... and makes all appear as one in Him. For just as the power of Christ's sacred flesh unites those in whom it dwells into one body, I think that in the same way the one and undivided Spirit of God, who dwells in all, leads all into spiritual unity.*

Noel Connelly, RIP: The universe reveals God, we cannot be saved without the universe

Jesus 3 things: close to Father God, sense of mission, didn't need enemies

at the end of His life He entrusted His mission to the Church

servant of the kingdom of God.

Prayers of the faithful (same as at Mass this morning)

Theresa Simon from Lebanon, 1<sup>st</sup> generation Australian, rich tapestry of diversity

The delegates to the 1937 4<sup>th</sup> Plenary Council, arrived on horseback

Members aged from 20 Bathurst to b.1932 the oldest, Vicar General, Cairns

Archbishop Timothy Costello SDB

Welcome to you all, brothers and sisters in faith, all equally welcome

heads of local bishops conferences, Nunciature in Canberra, National Council of Churches' representatives.

St Paul's words, missionary energy, persistence, etc, and Pope Francis  
speak boldly, listen humbly, both/and  
we have confidence that God gives good gifts and answers our prayers

An event governed by canon law and by tradition

4 areas of concern

increase of faith, ordering of common pastoral action, pastoral morals, common ecclesial law

This is a work of discernment

the voice we most need to hear, to discern, is the voice of the Holy Spirit

Do not be conformed to this world, Romans 12:1-2

Big hopes, big responsibilities, historic and grace-filled task

Representative of all, not for individual and group agendas

At times we may experience Pentecost dramatic, turning everything up-side-down,  
or in the still small breeze,

He will speak through all the elements of the Council, active and downtime

The God in whom we trust can work through the locked doors of the upper room,  
He is not hindered by lockdown, and lack of serendipitous coffee times

Recall of failures towards the vulnerable, children

Pope Francis has spoken of mission of the church; healer of wounds, warmer of hearts

Not everyone has experienced the church this way.

We must be prepared to be surprised, that God's ways are not our ways

Consensus suddenly emerged re the agenda based on Pope Francis's words, missionary option.

Evangelii Gaudium 27

*I dream of a "missionary option", that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world rather than for her self-preservation. The renewal of structures demanded by pastoral conversion can only be understood in this light: as part of an effort to make them more mission-oriented, to make ordinary pastoral activity on every level more inclusive and open, to inspire in pastoral workers a constant desire to go forth and in this way to elicit a positive response from all those whom Jesus summons to friendship with Himself. As John Paul II once said to the Bishops of Oceania: "All renewal in the Church must have mission as its goal if it is not to fall prey to a kind of ecclesial introversion".*

We don't know where we will find ourselves at the end of this week.

It is a step on the process, that has to be assimilated by us all.

Matt: Jesus comes to His disciples through the storm. 'Courage, it is I, do not be afraid.'

With eyes on Jesus, Peter walks confidently. When he takes his eyes off, he begins to sink.

This is Whose disciples we are.

'I am with you.'

He is, after all, the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Pause for personal reflection

Nicene Creed

(5 members are too ill to participate, including Bp Bill Wright)

TS. Recognition of membership. Signed by Archbishop Tim.

Recognition of the Officers. Confirmed by Archbishop Tim.

Coleridge: message from members to Pope Francis

Pope Francis gave permission to begin, and Pope Francis will confirm when it is concluded.

Letter read. 300+ members, it is the work of the HS

Come Holy Spirit

Bold decisions to make sure that the Church carries out the heart and mission of Christ.

'The Great Grace' given to the church in Australia at the dawn of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium – Plenary Council. Just as Vatican II was the Great Grace to the whole church in 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Nuncio, greetings on behalf of Holy See.

Renewed encounter with the Risen Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.

New and creative expressions of evangelical charity

Imparts Apostolic Blessing of Pope Francis via Secretary of State.

Archbishop Tim: Presentation of the agenda and program of coming 9 months. Confirmed.

This is where the open session ends.

## **Mass Tuesday 5 Oct 2021, St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Adelaide**

Water sprinkling rite

Eccl: there is a season for everything

R. Lord let Your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in You

Psalm: The word of the Lord is faithful...

Luke: Martha welcomed Him into her house. Sister Mary sat down at His feet.

Homily: Archbishop Patrick O'Regan

Another wonderful moment of grace

Good Samaritan story precedes this Gospel passage.

Mary shows her love by listening.

Horizontal love, Samaritan; vertical love, Mary.

Samaritan Sees; Mary Hears.

Neither are major characters, Samaritan and Mary

They model active doing discipleship, being discipleship.

Giving appropriate response to the situation

Active love required first situation (Samaritan), spiritual response required second situation (Mary).  
3rd day (of Plenary Council), also 3rd day of creation, fruit bearing plants on the earth.  
May it be so for us today, (ie fruitful).

## **Plenary Council livestream general session Tuesday 5 Oct 2021**

Darwin area, salt water people,  
places dictate cultural boundaries and dictate identity

Fr David Ranson, VG Broken Bay

Background in Christian spirituality and pastoral theology – taught tertiary level Catholic Institute Sydney

Song: Your servants are listening; listen to the Spirit speaking

Luke 10:38-42, Gospel of the day, Martha and Mary, Mary listened to Him speaking

Prayers of the faithful (same as yesterday)

Come Holy Spirit of Pentecost

Come Holy Spirit to the Great South Land

Welcome. Formalities done.

Usual daily activities will follow the pattern of:

opening contributions, prepared and spontaneous

listening, prayer and dialogue, small group encounters

Feedback from small groups to enable a bigger picture to be seen.

13 people will address the plenary session this morning.

Where may the Holy Spirit be leading the Church of God?

Minutes of yesterday, latest version posted recently, amendments have been incorporated.

Have a bit of a look, and scan through it.

If you have more amendments, that is still possible.

Thanks to those working hard in the background, techies etc

Vote on the minutes via the chat, section by section, surname order.

AB, CDE, FGH, IJKL, MN, OPQR, STUV, WXYZ

Simple majority has been reached (17 not confirmed)

Program for the day posted

Run order for this morning's session

Small groups sharing back to the Plenary (then interventions which we won't be privy to!) 3 mins each

Selina Hasham: Q1 & 5. Metaphor: Building a house, working off a plan with a common goal

heads, hands and heart conversion; caravan of solidarity working slowly so that none of the vulnerable are left behind. Small intentional listening groups in parish. What are the pathways for the wounded to come back to the church? Many mixed feelings from the process.

Q3. Toni Janke, Brisbane, woman, time of deep respectful listening, listening to what is between the lines, hope of seeing first nations peoples ministering to first nations people; what does marginalized mean?

Building a bridge vs closing a gap.

Q6. Catherine Jenkins, Bendigo: For some people this Agenda Question was first choice, some not. Learning how to receive love is necessary, finding time and space for prayer, in the Eucharist we behold God, prayer personally and communal nourishes mission.

Pause

Q7 & 10. Major Gavin Keating CSC. Canberra, group has decided to address Agenda Questions separately, even though links present between them. Valuable contributions, received, understood, appreciated – and used, re immigrant communities. Formation is an ongoing process, importance of leadership training, systems of accountability, not in official Question but interfaith and ecumenical dialogue should be there.

Q8 Erin Gillard. Wollongong. 3 themes, truly listening, 1<sup>st</sup> rule of St Benedict is to listen. Listening produces reverence for the other. Centrality of relationships, starting with deep encounter with Jesus Christ. Formation happens through relationships with people, accompaniment. Formation for all, in faith first and foremost, including discernment of God-given gifts and talents. Accompaniments, apprenticeship and mentorship.

Q9 & 12 Sr Mary Julian Ekman RSM. Focus on Q12 for first 2 days. 5 elements, language/terms, key model of priest is Jesus Christ and His self-sacrifice; formation, before, discernment, during, and after seminary. Need to discern all kinds of vocations, many aspirants have wide world experience (relationships, drugs trauma, etc), Community plus identity, providing healthy interaction with communities; how to prevent priestly and lay clericalism. Misuse of spiritual authority – definition of clericalism. Sense of hope.

Pause

Q 11 Fr Shammi, Tasmania; desire for renewing of parish life, baptism is the cornerstone of forming intentional disciples, Outward looking - parishes should be. Primary goal to help encounter with Jesus Christ, requires hospitality, formation of clergy in leadership. Feelings of hopefulness and optimism.

Q13, Hugo Ditroia. Wilcannia-Forbes; governance, discipleship. Conversion, call of baptism, Questions: What's missing? Are we going in circles? Who is governance for? Contradiction, everybody has baptismal leadership, but not all can govern, some can, some cannot, ie there can't be a group of all leaders. How do we as a church walk side by side on road towards Jesus Christ? Not going fast, but slower and more securely.

Q14 & 16. Woman (name and location not given in audio), Listening is an active choice, united in attentiveness to Jesus and love for the Church. Mission and Governance lens. Not sure on doing separately the Agenda Questions or together. Don't have to resolve everything this way. We need new wineskins. Who do we say that we are? Feeling uncertain and unsettled, yet hopeful. If we stay within the discomfort a path will emerge.

Q15 Sr Cecilia Joseph OP. Education. It has served us well for 200 years, gratitude and hope. Culture presents obstacles to families and youth. The school is to support family, not to replace family. Schools full, churches empty, how effective are they? How to measure success of Catholic education? not numbers alone. Formation needed for the formators, encounter with Jesus and full sacramental lives are necessary.

Pause

All small group presentations, in written form, are on a link in the chat.

Goodbye to the rest of us.

Mass Wednesday 6 Oct 2021, St Mary's cathedral, Sydney

Hymn: Gather us O God: Monica Brown

Acts 2: account of Pentecost

R. I will praise Your Name forever, my King and my God

Psalm 144: I will give You glory...

Luke 11: Lord teach us to pray: Our Father...

Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP

(Introductory remark) We implore the Spirit's wisdom upon the Council

Homily: Beautiful prayer, Our Father in Heaven

Touched the heart of Karl Marx's daughter.

Jesus is addressed as Teacher 60 times in the Gospel. He is our wisdom and guide.

Lord teach us to pray.

Pray like this...

Christians pray every day for protection from evil.

His Church is major protection for us.

Renew our church in our day.

Avoiding bad things isn't enough, we must also pursue the good. Food and forgiveness.

Daily bread of Eucharist, daily forgiveness of Sacrament of Penance.

Provident God renew Your Church in Australia today.

We are all too aware of the threats to God's favourites; the poor, children, vulnerable.

We try and do His commandments and be His Beatitudes.

Hearts, minds, souls all impacted.

Convert our hearts and align our deeds with Your holy will so that Your kingdom grows in our land.

Protector, provider, converter, King, but above all God, the ultimate why, worthy of all worship and praise.

First purpose of the Church is worship.

Renew Your Church, so that You are exalted as our holy heavenly God.

Totally other, yet totally for us.

There is such a God.

If only it were true.

We must be our nation's powerhouse of prayer.

With true and deep prayer we can face the dreams and the difficulties head on.

Thy will be done in Australia as it is in heaven.

### **Plenary Council livestream general session Wednesday 6 Oct 2021**

From Parramatta (video)

Care for country, care for living culture, trees, waterways, animals, stars,  
this always was, always will be, aboriginal land.



Nichola Mardon, chairperson for today, from Port Augusta, SA

26 groups of aboriginal languages in this area.

wife mother, 2 adult children, heart transplant recipient, 'chalkie', Port Pirie diocese

harsh terrain, outback desert, mining, farming,

3 prisons, detention centres, Mary McKillop's activity in this region

Prayer session

Luke 11, Gospel of this morning: Teach us to pray, Our Father

Prayers of the faithful

Song: To You, I give my heart to You, O Lord.

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SBD

At the heart of it all, this is a deep process of listening, affirming, confronting, challenging, inspiring

I still need to listen carefully, and discern my responses with the Holy Spirit.

Proposals for motions have been submitted.

consultative and deliberative votes, are to be drafted by drafting committee, not by members

Not yet ready, since small group process is ongoing

Any motion has to be an outcome of the plenary process of discernment,

Formal motions at 2<sup>nd</sup> assembly are expected, but not for this one.

Any submissions are proposals, and only that.

Any proposal should be accompanied by an intervention.

The 9 months will be used to develop formal motions, after study, consultation etc

Presentation of previous day's minutes

Pause for review and scan

AB, CDE, FGH, IJKL, MN, OPQR, STUV, WXYZ

234 votes, 231 confirmed the Minutes

Tomorrow, Q2 and Q4, plus day of reflection, think and pray

Sr Monica Cavanagh will moderate tomorrow's plenary, 12pm-3pm

outcomes from tomorrow are unknown

Fr Richard Lennan, Boston, USA, 5 min address, on advisor list.

Pope Francis' Laudato Si Chapter 4 speaks of integral ecology, not dependent on any one thing

our responses to God through economics, politics, etc

climate crisis

integral view of it all, to include as many factors as possible, re mission

The church is missionary because God is missionary.

Invitation to friendship and communion with Him, into God's own life

at same time we are invited to share that Life with others

The Church is a sign of God's kingdom, and a seed of God's kingdom

we have no option but to exist in this now

God's world is a graced world, yet a complex world.

Our task is to sniff out the presence of God in our world

We are called to be a light to the nations (to the peripheries)

Be open to be surprised to the activity of the Spirit at work

in unexpected places eg to listen to first nations, LGBT, other Christian churches

Is our response equivalent to what God is calling us to?

Amazon synod: proposed tasks 3,

1. unlearn things that make our God too small
2. be open to be expanded by God,
3. relearning the wisdom of God at the heart of our tradition

Pause

Small group reporting, 3 mins each

Q1 & 5. Helen Belcher. Hunter Valley, NSW: synodality is our journey, need to acknowledge hurts and mistakes of the past, take the church to people rather than bring the people to church.

We are not the treasure. Messiness is OK. Need to address the real issue.

Both/And not either/or. What would the church look like without bricks and mortar?

Schools of both prayer and mission, proposal.

Recommend Diocesan synods and parish pastoral councils, use inclusive language.

Q3. Carol. (possibly Carol Teodori-Blahut, Parramatta). Hearing voices from brothers & sisters.

Being indigenous and Catholic are not two separate identities

Same source from both, Jesus the point of connection for us all. We need to get to know each other.

Truth telling around hurts in these matters is really important, racism etc

Two strong themes: 1. yearning for a church dialogue with first nations and others

2. urgent, responsibility to change society for the better, to reduce racism etc

Q6. Fr Peter W. (no idea whether Whitely or Williams),

Contemplation and Mission needs balance, they flow in and out of each other,

John on Jesus chest looking outwards, image

Concerned that many especially those of school age have not been invited into close relationship with Jesus

Attend to sense of welcome and hospitality, avoid being too clubby and too comfortable

Communion, participation, mission, from one to the next. Positive and tired feeling.

Pause

Q7 & Q10. Sr Maeve Heaney VDMF, Brisbane: Share not only liturgical rites, but also cultural heritage, governance, new movements and communities, . Eastern churches share our missionary impulse

Need to know and understand the other rites, experientially, with mutual learning

multicultural church, do we need a body (church entity) to facilitate this mutual exchange?

Stop using 'immigrant communities' as term; have prayer sessions that reflect diversity of rites.

Q8. (Name and location not in audio) Formation for mission. Mary vs Martha, 3 ideas,

1. distinction between mission and missionary, needs time with Jesus;

2. centrality of Christ, being Christ-centred is crucial;

3. need for integration of formation, holistic.

Still much to discuss. Only one thing is important. Listen to one another. The story is not finished.

Q9. Gemma Thomson, Perth: Focused on Q9 and not on Q12.

Shared understanding of terms needed, structural change plus cultural change,

holiness is as much about looking out as looking in,

Jesus as servant leader, inspires the leadership of the whole priestly people.

Nurture relationships between priests and priestly people.  
Review ways of seeing things as well as ways of doing things.  
Need to set aside time to waste time with God.  
Professional supervision of priests was considered.

Pause.

Q11 Raj (aka Dharmaraj Rajasigam). Kuringai land, Broken Bay. Strong desire to change and become true missionaries. Church language, is it understood by all? Is clergy-centred model still right? Dare we think of a new way of being parish? Senior leadership teams. Difficulties when cultural differences exist. Variety of gifts, a variety of needs. Questions about financial ability of parishes in current situation. Hopeful of heading in right direction.

Q13. Dr Nimmi Candappa: Governance, needs gifted laity and well-formed priests. What is an apostolic church? Many documents are already done, eg. Light From the Southern Cross report, but there is resistance to implementation, with no accountability. Is only being consultative enough? Passionate voicing of differences, need for stability for the young; True governance begins at the feet of Christ.

Q14 & Q16 Danny (Daniel Casey) Northern Sydney; Martha & Mary: two people loving Jesus very much, but with different priorities. Sitting at Jesus feet, gazing at Him. Need for clarity about mission. Relationship between institutions and agencies. We cannot work in silos. Governance exists to serve mission. It must support the mission to evangelise. There are opportunities for governance. Light from the Southern Cross document (second mention). Jesus working through people is Who does the saving, not structures and governance.

(Ed. A PDF of the Light from the Southern Cross report can be found if you scroll to the bottom of <https://thingsbotholdandnew.com/> )

Q15. Fr Cameron Forbes, Melbourne: Education through missionary lens. Place of welcome, hospitality and mission. A place to encounter Jesus. Of witness AND authentic relationships. Called to be well-formed witnesses of faith. Connection and collaboration between all levels needed. Teachers are pressured by many demands. A place of clear Catholic identity. How can success be measured? Prepare description of what a graduate of Catholic education should look like.

Goodbye to online participants. Back on Friday.

### **Mass Thursday 7 Oct 2021, Maronite, St Joseph's Croydon NSW**

The Maronite rite contains many beautiful prayers exulting the saving power of the Holy Cross eg:

*Blessed are you, O Wood of the Holy Cross, for you erased Adam's curse and restored his banished children to their inheritance. Blessed are you, O Holy Cross, for you united heavenly and earthly beings. Blessed are you, O Holy Cross, for you fulfilled the words of the prophets, enlightened the apostles in their preaching, crowned the martyrs for their faith, and honoured the confessors for their loyalty.*

Copy of Liturgical texts:

<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Mass-for-October-7-Plenary-Council.pdf>

1 Thess 5

Concerning times and seasons

The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night.

Matthew 24

Who is the faithful and wise slave placed in charge of giving food and drink at proper time?

Archbishop Antoine-Charbel Tarabay OLM: Homily:

Is it only the food that needs to be provided for the household?

Also needed: clothing, motivation, encouragement, inspiration to care for others

This parable is similar to the parable about the master of the talents.

Both masters entrust duties and responsibilities, and if they are done well, there is reward.

The Plenary Pilgrimage we are on, it does not belong to us, but to the Lord,

we are here because the master of the Pilgrimage has entrusted these privileges and responsibilities mindful of those given to us to care for.

Maybe this journey was prepared for us from the beginning of time?

Receive it with humility and gratitude.

We have nothing to offer which does not come from our Master.

Only if we are humble do we work for the Master wholeheartedly.

Eastern churches have been making this journey with you, as dusty and patient pilgrims.

Metanoia is only brought about by prayer and discipline of the Spirit.

It is about conversion.

May we all be guided by the Holy Spirit.

We cannot presume this guidance; we need humility and obedience to the word of the Master who seems far away, and to serve those He has entrusted to us.

(Ed. This was one of the poorer transcriptions)

### **Mass Friday 8 Oct 2021, St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, Wollongong**

Ephesians 3 To grasp the utter fullness of God, every family

R. Lord let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in You

Psalm 32: Your word Lord is faithful...

Matt 26 Gethsemane

Hymn: Let them come to the water (not on schedule)

Mass for reconciliation, Eucharistic Prayer

Homily: Bishop Brian Mascord

Line from a musical: 'Come alive, dream with your eyes open.'

In His agony, we see the distress Jesus is experiencing, his vulnerability

Moving forward does involve suffering and distress to some point.

Jesus suffered just like us: Fully human, fully divine.

He is calling us to be watchful; especially watchful re the distress around us.

The Heart of God is passionately in love with all creation.

God's promise, God-with-us is very real to us in this process.

We turn to this same God in prayer, who understands us so completely.

Pope Francis says that we have a daily responsibility, of bringing the Gospel to the people we meet each day, informal preaching. Any moment could be a time of grace, stay awake in order to take hold of it.

In all things God is with us.

Called to stay awake

It means we will be vulnerable, it won't be perfect, there will be difficulties

Dreaming with eyes wide open.

## **Plenary Council livestream general session Friday 7 Oct 2021**

Chairperson for today; Paul O'Keeffe, Patrician Brother, The Entrance, Central Coast, NSW

Patrician Brother order was begun in Ireland, and first arrived in Australia in 1883.

Background in education, teaching and principal, with PNG experience; now Provincial.

Welcome, Prayer

Eph 3: 1<sup>st</sup> reading from this morning's Mass.

Height, depth, knowing the love of Christ

the utter fullness of God

The Canticle of Turning, cf Magnificat, rhyming poetry

The world is about to turn.

Archbishop Timothy Costello:

We are in the final days of this assembly.

Current task: how to bring small groups to a conclusion?

Emergence of key directions and ideas.

Formulation of group reports, plus individual proposal submissions

Members will be kept updated during preparations for the second assembly in July 2022

Minutes, from Wed & Thurs (Ed. Necessary, but boring for online participants!)

238 confirmed. Number ending in ?8 not confirmed (audio poor) for Wednesday's Minutes.

233 confirmed. 10 do not confirm for Thursday's Minutes.

(Ed. It is very difficult for online participants to tell if non confirmations are due to technical difficulties, or whether they are actually disagreements with the Minutes. It does matter.)

Agenda for today.

Small Group reports:

Q1 & Q5. Prof. Dermot Nestor, Sydney: nature and character of response,

All within creation is loved by God.

Always the servants, not the masters.

'the space we have stood around has flowed into us to keep' (Irish poet)

Q3. Mary O'Reeri, Broome: Our Father calls us into relationship, culture and faith,

like a song-line, showing us who we are and leading us forward.

NATSICC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council) has 5 practical recommendations:

1. Cultural awareness training. 2. Formation for ministry. 3. Welcoming space through ritual. 4.

Acknowledge traditional custodianship. 5. Inclusion & consultation.

Uluru statement, 'From the Heart', recommended reading.

(Ed. NATSICC working document: <https://www.natsicc.org.au/assets/eatsicc.pdf>

Uluru statement: <https://ulurustatement.org/the-statement> )

Q6. Stephanie Sullivan, Canberra, (although Townsville on the member list)

Our desire for God is also nourished by Him.

Jesus loved with a compassionate human heart

Liturgy has to involve body, soul, spirit; and must be beautiful.

Adoration, requires formation, every prayer has to lead to the Eucharist.

Concern for any adoration divorced from the Eucharist.

Prepare prayers for families to use, especially a suitably modified version Liturgy of the Hours.

Pause

Q7 & Q10. Fr Denis Stanley, Melbourne: clerical formation

Encounter of Jesus is central, needed.

Desire for a more diverse selection of those accepted for seminary

Formation cannot be completely outsourced to the seminary

Praxis plus orthodoxy is required.

Discernment of leadership capability is essential.

Online learning while immersed in parishes. Could this be a solution?

Accreditation. Accountability aligned to growth.

Q8. Loretta McKeering: Forming leaders for mission

Prayer is key for formation,

but it needs to be modelled at home, by leaders and by communities.

Importance of variety of prayer styles.

Importance of family as centre of formation.

Church has role to support family structure.

Sense of community has impact through life.

Need more than a program or a course, something more ongoing.

New communities of apostolic life have much to offer.

(Ed. Here things get difficult to untangle. Is Dr Angela's report for Q9 or Q11? Can't tell from the content. There was a report re-done because the connection was poor the first time around. Did a report get missed out? Don't know. But I can't make the reports add up. Maybe you can? And maybe next time the moderators will insist without fail in the Agenda Question number being announced, and the name of the reporter too.)

Q? Dr Angela McCarthy (? Can't find this name on the member list, maybe I mis-heard)

Witness of priest and people praying together is important.

How do we nurture prayer in our communities?

Q? Who? Structures, parishes to become centres of prayer and mission

Establish parish small groups. This isn't a new concept.

But we must be clearer about terminology and what we are called to do.

3<sup>rd</sup> rite reconciliation spoken of as an option for those who have suffered abuse (Ed. and therefore unable to cope with any one-on-one situation with a priest.)

Pause

Q12. Deanne Gould (a.k.a. red hat lady):  
Need for flexible structures, it cannot be one size fits all.  
Acknowledge new movements and agencies, working together not in competition.  
Encourage collaboration and working with the gifts of the Holy Spirit/  
Avoid silo mentality  
Structures are not the end, but the means to the end.  
Being connected to the mission is essential for discerning structures.

Q1 & Q5. 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt. Prof Dermot Nestor:  
The land is where my own dreams now take shape.  
Nature and character of response.  
Stimulus for prayer and for action.  
Laudato Si, not only common plan for universal church, but common plan for Australia

Q13. Prof Renee Kohler-Ryan: Governance; feelings of no need to rush, plus impatience, at same time.  
Inclusion of women should not be reduced to only ordination of women.  
The unique gifts of male/female require both co-responsibility and proclamation.  
This a matter of culture, not just of structure and personnel.

Q14 & Q16. Claire Victory:  
Jesus is our model of non-judgmental nurturing.  
We must show the community can be trusted. (Ed. Not sure if parish community or church community.)  
How can we speak sense to the world?  
We are meant to be in dialogue, and not in judgement.  
Governance is the way we welcome and invite to participation.  
Read: Light from the Southern Cross report.  
Governance is about how power is exercised.

Q15. Alison Newell, Central Coast, NSW:  
Education through missionary lens.  
Praying with heart of a child, with the students.  
Propose spiritual directors in schools.  
Feelings of going around in circles.  
Are we really listening; or going back decades?  
Frustration. Elephants in the room. Looking for convergence.  
Desire for ongoing working party.

Pause

Farewell to the online people.

### **Mass Saturday 9 Oct 2021, St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, pre-recorded**

2 Cor: Where the Spirit of God is there is freedom, we are preaching JC as Lord

R. Lord send out Your Spirit and renew the face of the earth  
Psalm 104. You founded the earth on its base to stand firm from age to age...

Luke 5. Jesus in Simon's boat, the huge catch, the promise to be fishers of men.

Homily. Archbishop Peter A. Comensoli

By now we've had 6 days of sitting in front of a computer.

This Mass was pre recorded weeks ago.

Scream, screen, gleam, and other rhyming words.

I hope our faces have reflected the brightness of the Lord.

May we reflect that presence to others.

Our task; to reveal the work of the Lord who is Spirit

Let us not lose sight of our primary task, to reveal the face of Christ among us.

This face of Christ is particular to our times and place, a face of dignity, and pain, with some indigenous features, marked with a great mix of cultural cultures, and looking less Anglo-Celtic and more Asian.

We must find ourselves embodied in the Gospel.

To find a catch, but also be caught ourselves.

As Jesus has said, 'Do not be afraid'.

Leave behind what hinders us and follow in His ways.

### **Plenary Council livestream general session Saturday 9 Oct 2021**

Chairperson: Fr Tom McDonough CP, Tasmania.

This year the Passionist order celebrates 300 years since being founded.

He has Marist, Mercy and Jesuit roots, the soil that nurtured his faith and vocation

Faith , hope, prophecy and gratitude.

Prayer

Pope Francis' Evangelii Gaudium 27 (Agenda theme)

-transforming everything for mission

2 Cor, reading from this morning's Mass.

Minutes for Friday

Add dream to screen etc to the rhyming challenge from this morning's homily

Today in each group, ask, is there anything we have missed re proposal preparation?

Minutes accepted with 236 Yes votes.

4 mins reports (more than the usual 3 mins) today from small groups.

Our aim: To create a more missionary and Christ-centred church in Australia.

(Ed. Since this was the final public group report, groups had been encouraged to share their proposals.)

Q1 Shaun De Zylva, Darwin: How to accompany others on conversion journey.

Process: personal conversion, then communal conversion, then renewal.

Metanoia based on faith, hope and love.

The voices of those who are missing lead us to conversion.

On a mission of contrition.

Suggest small groups in parishes, with a yearly get together of all small groups in the parish

Propose Synod for all dioceses every 3 years.

Encourage small family-based groups.

Co-responsibility of all to be part of diocesan mission statements.

Propose governance body to oversee mission and accountability.



Q3 Sabrina Stevens, Cairns:

Pope St John Paul II's 1986 speech: it is long past time to receive the gifts of first nations people.

Support the Uluru statement From The Heart.

NATSICC submission, implement its 5 practical applications.

Promote 'on country' learning.

Inclusion in all decision making levels for First Nation peoples

Have a Reconciliation Plan, commit to the process, make gestures towards healing and empowerment.

Commit to the well-being of First Nation peoples.

Q5. Catherine McAleer, Toowoomba,

Nature and character of response to ecological conversion.

Challenge rather than certainty

We must engage with the world.

Worship of God begins with concern for our common home.

Adopt the Laudato Si action plan, 7 goals, implement in all 7 sectors of church society (parish, deanery, diocese, agencies, PJPs, religious orders, schools, etc (Ed. They weren't clearly named, best guess))

Engage all levels of all parts of the church

Embrace interdisciplinary education

A gospel to ensure a home for our future generations

Pause

Q6. Trevor Trotter SSC, Melbourne

Importance of prayer for each participant.

Our desire for God is nourished by God in the first instance.

Discipleship must be intentional.

How do we encourage people to pray?

Our challenge: welcoming people to the eucharist and providing formation/catechesis.

Need for individual and household/family/small group prayer.

What of the groups who feel excluded from the liturgy?

Positive about variety of helps, new movements, various spiritualities.

The popularity of adoration among young people may be a starting point for reaching them.

Support for discipleship can come from podcasts and other online media.

Q7. Theresa Simon, Maronite: Diverse traditions

Do not use term 'immigrant communities'

A more organized and coordinated approach is needed.

We must not just acknowledge diversity but enshrine it.

We need more exposure to the prayer and worship of eastern churches.

We need priests able to minister in their own language to language groups.

Education is part of enshrining diversity.

Q8. Peter Carroll FMS, Sydney

Forming people for mission:

What do we mean by leadership, mission and discipleship?

All are grounded in encounter with Jesus

Leadership has to be grounded in the Gospel's model of servant leadership.

Formation opportunities need to be provided everywhere: cities, regional, rural and outback

Formation is to be invitational, and community building, integrated and experiential  
Seeking multi-dimensional formation in leadership.

Pause

Q9. Brigid Cooney, Canberra:

Use existing documents and research.

Fund research project on pre and post seminary programs, an evidence-based study, and also get conclusions tested in Australian context.

Grounded in community.

Recommend an extended time of accompaniment for potential seminarians.

Recommend seminary studies to be done with women, and with some women lecturers, so as to foster a culture of collaboration and reduce clericalism.

Some existing formation can be used for both lay and clerical formation.

Inaugurate a Year of prayer for vocations, ALL vocations; priestly, religious, married, single, consecrated

Family stress is barrier to vocational calling.

Q10. Anthony (a religious)

Missionary dimension of church needs continuous formation of clergy.

Recommend cross pollination between eastern and western rites, and between western rites.

Have national standards and processes of accompaniment for pre-seminary discernment.

Discern candidate's kerygmatic desire.

Consider whether some formation could be done with all vocations participating.

Recommend post-ordination formation and mentoring.

Consider matching the needs and gifts of both new priests and the parish communities they are sent to.

Develop a way to discern whether someone has a vocation to the episcopate.

Q11. (phonetically sounded like Dural Shore-ah, but can't find match on member list)

All are called to be missionary disciples.

Recommend a leadership support team for mission in each parish.

Bishops could draw up guidelines for how such teams operate.

Consider which existing programs attract and keep missionary disciples, and implement eg Divine Renovation and the Sydney archdiocese 'Go Make Disciples'

Use parish forums to encourage dialogue.

Encourage mixed small groups, with diversity of ages, cultures, vocations, a.k.a. basic ecclesial communities

(Ed. <https://www.divinerenovation.org/> & <https://www.gomakedisciples.org.au/> )

Pause

Q12. Fr Greg Kennedy, Central NSW (Bathurst?)

All structured for mission: parish, diocese, seminary formation, sacramental disciplines.

The reason and function of structures are always based in Christ.

We need to be more large hearted, and have uniformity in some things, diversity in others.

1 inclusive

2 connecting and supporting relationships; not competitive

3 flexible, open to learning from secular structures

4 aspirational, can we dream big?

5 possible, acknowledge the limitations

Having a lay mission group in parishes would enable the parish to carry on the mission (Ed. Matt 28:19-20) when priests inevitably get moved from parish to parish.

Q13. Mark: Governance in synodality and co-responsibility:

Mature faith leaders are essential for mission.

Quality of leadership is paramount.

Relationships are at the heart of synodality.

Resource: Light From the Southern Cross report.

Governance has to be fit for particular purpose (which will not be the same for each institution)

Seek unanimity and consensus; grant deliberative votes not just consultative power.

We need to re-cast power around service.

Love must come before power.

Research Lumen Gentium, expose any gaps that haven't been addressed.

Explore admitting women to the diaconate.

Q14. Virginia Bourke, Melbourne:

By embodying what we were talking about, synodality and co-responsibility

Governance needs continual review and openness to improvement.

Look at best practice in civil environments, enlightened by Gospel reflection.

Read: Light From the Southern Cross report and the ACBC's (Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference) written response.

Promote professional development and accountability, with annual reviews

Use discernment and spiritual conversation.

Work against power imbalances.

Prepare a document with all ecclesial roles and show which ones are open to the laity.

(Ed. <http://armidale.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Bishops-Response-Light-from-the-Southern-Cross.pdf>)

How to understand what the process of spiritual conversation is:

<https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/The-Practice-of-Spiritual-Conversations.pdf>

<https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/spiritual-conversations-will-aid-plenary-council-discernment/> )

Pause

Q15. Danielle Fairthorne: Education:

Mission, witness, encounter, rich formation for all, value of families, curriculum approaches

(Ed. Sorry, this string of phrases went too fast for me to get the gist of it).

Desire for the missionary approach to be inclusive yet authentically Catholic

Schools as places of listening and dialogue

Develop healthy relationships: schools, agencies etc with parishes.

Read documents: The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, & A Framework For Formation For Mission in Catholic Education

On-going working group needed.

(Ed. These are the documents:

[https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc\\_con\\_ccatheduc\\_doc\\_2704\\_1998\\_school2000\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_2704_1998_school2000_en.html) &

Q16. Claire Victory:

Strong themes emerged.

Leadership needs dialogue between dioceses and agencies

Group needed more time.

Desire for ongoing involvement in the process.

Recommend that forums regularly meet to encourage, support and plan for mission

Catholic social teaching underpins all that is done.

Agency leaders need to be capable faith-filled leaders.

Formation requires both formation on mission and on Catholic social teaching.

Pause

Farewell to online participants

Thanks to the two sign language ladies

### **Closing Mass, 11am Sunday 10 Oct 2021, St Stephen's Cathedral, Brisbane**

Acknowledgement of country by David Miller, central QLD representative.

May we walk softly, respectfully, humbly on our sacred land

Hymn: Christ be our light

Coleridge: In His name I welcome all of you, in person, and online

Wisdom 7: In comparison to wisdom riches are as nothing

R. Fill us with Your love O Lord and we will sing for joy

Psalm 89: Make us know the shortness of our life that we may gain wisdom of heart...

Hebrews 4: The Word of God is something alive and active

Mark 10: What must I do to inherit eternal life?

Homily: Archbishop Mark Coleridge

How do we feel at the end of this extraordinary Week?

It has been more gift than hard work.

Respect even when we disagreed.

God's grace and the Church's faith.

In all we have sought to be wise with the wisdom of God.

As real as a person, loveable, a wisdom that takes flesh.

Without the Holy Spirit there would be no Plenary Council,  
this wisdom is something greater than Solomon

This all creating Word is Jesus Christ.

Not abstract.

As Risen, a Word for every time and place

His is the face we have sought to see, the voice we have sought to see.  
Listening with each other with new ears, looking at each other with new eyes.  
A call, to the searchers, looking for more,  
to those who have a sense that this isn't enough.  
Jesus looked at him and loved him  
It is the call that answers the man's questions  
Called to leave everything and follow; to know the fullness of life/love  
Giving to God not just something, but everything.  
The man said no to the call.  
Fear of loss.  
Any time we answer God with No, sadness is the result.  
Opposite of sadness is the joy of the Gospel,  
in our Yes, finding something more than sceptre and throne.  
The Holy Spirit draws us beyond our fears and into love  
The answer is clearer now than back in 2016, but the answer must grow clearer still.  
The seeds of the 1st assembly are to bear fruit in the 2nd assembly.  
The process has been comparable to a midwife, bringing a child to birth, slow, painful and messy,  
but ultimately it becomes joyful and fruitful.  
Nothing is impossible for God.

## Final Notes

The Plenary Council website <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>  
and the Plenary Council YouTube channel  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPKFmOZcjJfMQ9SfcotyZJg>  
remain the best and primary sources of information on the Plenary Council and its processes.

Should you know an individual or group that would find this rough transcript useful, share it with them.

For those who find a document of this length a bridge too far, a companion document ie. a concise Tweet-sized summary of 7 pages- together with relevant snippets gleaned from online sources - is available from <http://www.societyofsaints.net/blog/first-assembly-of-the-plenary-council>