



Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council Meeting 4

Friday 17th November 6.30pm-8:30pm; Saturday 18th November

St Brendan's Parish Pastoral Centre, Shepparton

REPORT ON THE MEETING

Present

Bishop Shane Mackinlay, Very Rev Joe Taylor VG, Mrs Alana Brennan, Rev Vijay Bandanadam ALCP/OSS, Rev Stephen Bolling, Mr Mick Chalkley, Mrs Jobelle Collier, Mr Paul Desmond, Mrs Gabrielle Downie (Chair), Mrs Angela Finn, Mr Stephen McKinley, Mr Michael McLinden, Mr Jean-Marie Mupenda, Mr Miggy Podosky, Rev Jackson Saunders, Mrs Christine Sebire.

Apologies

Officers Dr Chris Cotter, Executive Officer
 Mr Tim Nolan, Minute Secretary
 Mrs Leslie Cooper, Project Officer

Meeting Focus

The Council Chair, Mrs Gabby Downie indicated that there were two major agenda items for the meeting. First: formation on the Synod for a Synodal Church, led by Bishop Shane. Second: members would continue working toward a documented strategic plan for the diocese within the three established Strategic Direction Interest Groups.

Formation – Synod for a Synodal Church

Bishop Shane provided a presentation on the XVI Ordinary Synod of Bishops: For a Synodal Church.

Bishop Shane gave an overview of the Synod process, noting that:



- He has just returned from Rome after attending the first of two sessions of the Synod of Bishops.
- The aim of the gathering is the Synodal conversion of the church- to renew the structures and processes and to find a way to be more Synodal in everything the Church does.
- The theme of the Synod is “Communion Participation Mission”.

Following his presentation, Bishop Shane asked the Council members to choose one of three sections of the first General Assembly Synthesis Report – *A Synodal Church in Mission*:

1. Synodality: Experience and Understanding, 9. Women in the Life and Mission of the Church or 16. Towards a Listening and Accompanying Church.

From their reading of the text, Bishop Shane asked the members to address the following questions:

- a) Is there something that encourages you?
- b) Is there something you would like to have seen addressed differently?
- c) Is there something that you think we should consider further or take action about?

Discussion took place in small groups and then as a Council.

Strategic Direction Interest Groups

The meeting turned to the work of the three Strategic Directions Interest groups. The Strategic Directions are based on the Final Report of the Preparation and Consultation for the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council and informed by the Concrete Proposals for the Council from the Diocesan Assembly (15 February 2023).

The Strategic Directions:

1. **Missionary and pastoral outreach** to families, young people, marginalised groups and those who are baptised but are no longer active in parish life.
2. **Promote the equal dignity of women and men** enhancing the role of women in the Church in Sandhurst; and to overcoming assumptions, culture, practices and language that lead to inequality.
3. **Strengthening connections** between parishes and schools, parishes and Chancery, between parishes, Chancery and Catholic Education Sandhurst, and other Catholic entities in the Diocese.
4. **Promote initial and ongoing formation** of the faithful in missionary discipleship, missionary and pastoral outreach, theology and liturgy, ministry, listening, dialogue and discernment.

All groups are incorporating Strategic Direction 2 “Promote the Equal dignity of women and men” within their focus area.

The three groups checked-in with each other, shared their progress and gave feedback.

Each Interest Group provided information to the Council on:



- the process followed to reach their current stage of action,
- their identified actions,
- the evidence which will be used to prove the success of the actions,
- and what enablers are available.

Goal Setting for a Diocesan Strategic Plan

The Strategic Direction Interest Groups set about defining three goals that to be presented to Bishop Shane designed to embody the Mission and Pastoral Council's direction and give life to the Strategic Directions. After a sustained period of working on the goals each Interest Group presented a goal to the Council for reflection and development.

Diocesan Finance Council

Mr Mick Chalkley reported that he has attended his first meeting of the Diocesan Finance Council. He highlighted two major topics of discussion at the meeting: insurance arrangements for the diocese and the ethical investment of Church money.

Report on Professional Learning

Dr Chris Cotter reported on his attendance at a two-week intensive course at KU Leuven in Belgium. He briefly shared his learnings related to the Enhancing Catholic School Identity (ECSI) and the Searching for Parish Engagement Scale (SPES) research projects during the intensive.

College of Consultors

Mrs Christine Sebire reported on the recent College of Consultors meeting, describing the complex and careful decision making that took place relating to the movement of priests to new parishes.

150th Anniversary Celebrations

A report from the first meeting of 150th Anniversary of the Diocese celebrations was included in the meeting papers.

Sandhurst Youth Ministry

The Sandhurst Youth Ministry Reference Group held its first meeting on Wednesday 15th November. The members of this Group are people who have experience with youth ministry and are a mixture of teachers, young adults, and priests. Ms Michaela Brooks, teacher and Assistant to the Principal (Faith and Charism) at St Mary of the Angels College (Nathalia) accepted nomination for the role of Chair for the Reference Group at the meeting. Mr Miggy Podosky and Fr Jackson Saunders also reported that there had been a successful World Youth Day (WYD) reunion in Shepparton in October, with most pilgrims in attendance.

Microsoft Teams Training

Members of the Council will participate in training for this platform as required.



Farewell to Mr Paul Desmond

Mrs Gabby Downie acknowledged the retirement of Mr Paul Desmond as Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd. Paul was thanked for his work as a member of the SMPC.

Meeting Dates for 2024

Friday 23 February and Saturday 24 February

Saturday 20 April

Saturday 20 July

Friday 22 November and Saturday 23 November