



Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council – Meeting 9

Friday, 21 February 2025 6:00 pm – 8:30 pm

Saturday, 22 February 2025 8:30 am – 3:00 pm

Mons Jeffries Pastoral Centre 121 Knight Street, Shepparton

Members: Bishop Shane Mackinlay, Very Rev Joe Taylor VG, Mrs Alana Brennan, Rev Vijay Bandanadam ALCP/OSS, Rev Stephen Bolling, Mr Mick Chalkley (Chair), Mrs Jobelle Collier, Mrs Libby Dowling, Mrs Angela Finn, Ms Kate Fogarty, Mr Stephen McKinley, Mr Michael McLinden, Mr Jean-Marie Mupenda, Mr Miggy Podosky, Mrs Christine Sebire.

Officers: Dr Chris Cotter, Executive Officer
Mrs Leslie Cooper, Minutes Secretary

Guests: Mr Geoff Gowdie, Assistant Director Mission and Pastoral Life
Mrs Claire Spinelli, Youth Ministry Team Leader
Rev Ronaldo Masilang RC, visiting priest Shepparton South, Mooroopna, Nagambie

REPORT ON THE MEETING

SMPC Member Formation: “Final Document” of the Synod for a Synodal Church

The session was led by Dr Chris Cotter and began with a short input on key terms (mission, evangelising and disciple) followed by reflection and discussion which focused on the implications of Part V “Forming People for Missionary Discipleship” of the Final Document for the Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals. Members felt that Part V of the Final Document affirmed the goals in Strategic Direction 3 “Life Giving and Empowering Formation”. Key points of discussion: formation ought to assist the faithful to embrace baptism and co-responsibility for mission, wherever possible formation should be in common for all the faithful (lay, ordained and seminarians), formation should be engaging, accessible, impact the digital space, embrace different cultures and be in the form of accompaniment.

Liturgy of the Word

The liturgy was led Mrs Christine Sebire and focused on the theme of the Jubilee Year: Pilgrims of Hope.

Acknowledgement of Fr Jackson Saunders

Fr Jackson joined the group via a video call. The Chair, Mr Mick Chalkley and Bishop Shane thanked Fr Jackson for his contribution to the Council over the past two years. (Fr Jackson left the Goulburn Valley deanery when appointed as assistant priest for the Cathedral Cluster.) A member of the clergy from the Goulburn Valley deanery will soon be appointed to fill this casual vacancy on the Council.

Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals

The first two Statutes governing the Council were reviewed. Discussion arose on the distinctive way that the Council “acts”. Key points: the Council does not act in the commonsense understanding of the term, that is, the Council does not “go somewhere” and do “things”, the Council listens and gains feedback, and practices dialogue and discernment, gives advice and makes recommendations.

This discussion led directly into a series of activities facilitated by Mr Geoff Gowdie. These activities invited members of the Council to advise and recommend steps for a plan to operationalise Strategic Direction 3 “Life Giving and Empowering Formation” and how goals 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, support the goals in the other two Strategic Directions. Mr Gowdie will use the data obtained through the activities to begin drafting a diocesan formation plan for feedback.

August Meeting of the Council

Bishop Shane will be away. A regular Council meeting will not take place, however a day of formation for the members will be arranged.

Diocesan Communications Plan

Data will be provided and feedback sought on the four main media channels currently in use: 1. Sandpiper e-News, 2. Sandhurst Diocesan website, 3. social media (Facebook and Instagram), and 4. affiliation with local newspapers (Bendigo, Shepparton and Wangaratta). An expert reference group is also being formed to support the development of a communications plan.

Dialogue Day for Sandhurst school principals and priests: 14 May 2025

Ms Kate Fogarty reported that the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals and Shared Mission Agreement will be on the agenda at the upcoming Dialogue Day to be held in Shepparton. The governance arrangements for Sandhurst Catholic schools will also be clarified on the day.

Sandhurst Youth Ministry Reference Group

Mrs Claire Spinelli provided a brief report. Key points:

- Sandhurst Youth Ministry Reference Group met on 15 February for a day of formation, listening, thinking, reflection and dialogue which led to recommendations for strategies to operationalise the goals for Youth Ministry in the diocese.
- There are two vacancies on the Sandhurst Youth Ministry Team. Further consideration will be given to the skillsets and attributes required before a recruitment process begins.
- The key event for Sandhurst Youth Ministry in 2025 is the Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) to be hosted by the Archdiocese of Melbourne in late November and early December. It is critical that ACYF is not a “one-off” mountain top experience for our young people. Therefore, a plan that includes preparation for the festival and a post-event strategy will be critical.
- Setting up a structure to activate the partnership between schools, parishes, priests and the Chancery is also a priority for 2025.

Jubilee 2025 Pilgrims of Hope: Diocesan Plan

Dr Chris Cotter indicated that the diocese is in the midst of two 'cross-over' Jubilees: the 150th Jubilee which continues until 30 March and the Jubilee of the Universal Church "Pilgrims of Hope" which officially commenced on 29 December 2024. The Mission and Pastoral Life Office has developed and shared resources relating to the 5 designated pilgrimage sites in the diocese. Parishes and schools are encouraged to use these resources and are free to choose how they use them, including arranging a local pilgrimage to celebrate the Jubilee. Further resources will be developed throughout 2025.

The official pronouncement for the Sandhurst celebration for the Jubilee Year will take place at the Chrism Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral on 15 April 2025.

Council membership beyond 2025

Chair, Mr Mick Chalkley provided information relating to the current term of membership on the Council. The initial three-year term of appointment to the SMPC concludes in early April 2026. There will be a need to both maintain continuity and refresh the membership of the Council. According to the Statutes members are permitted to complete two terms consecutively. A survey seeking information about the intentions of current members of the Council will be circulated.