



## Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

**Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council – Meeting 10**  
**Saturday, 31 May 2025, 8:30 am – 3:00 pm**

**Mons Jeffrey Pastoral Centre, 121 Knight Street, Shepparton**

- Members:** Bishop Shane Mackinlay, Very Rev Joe Taylor VG, Rev Vijay Bandanadam ALCP/OSS, Mrs Alana Brennan, 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, Administration  
Ms Josie Cortese, Administration Support
- Guests:** Mr Greg Westbrook (General Counsel and Acting Diocesan Business Manager)  
Mr Geoff Gowdie (Assistant Director, Mission and Pastoral Life)  
Rev Ronaldo Masilang RCJ (to be appointed PP Shepparton South, Mooroopna and Nagambie, and priest member of the Council)  
Ms Katrina Strong (Sandhurst Communications Coordinator)
- Apologies:** Rev Vijay Bandanadam ALCP/OSS, Mrs Angela Finn, Mrs Christine Sebire.

### REPORT ON THE MEETING

#### **Diocesan Updates: Finance, Safeguarding and Cathedral Square**

Greg Westbrook is General Counsel and Acting Business Manager for the Diocese. He is also first point of contact for Safeguarding in the Diocese.

#### Finance

A financial report for the previous financial year was presented (2024-2025, see Sandhurst [Year in Review 2024](#), p. 58). Specific budget initiatives for the 2025-2026 financial year that relate to the [Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals](#) were highlighted: recruitment of staff to the Office of Mission and Pastoral Life to develop and drive plans and initiatives that realise these *Goals*, and specific initiatives such the Australian Catholic Youth Festival 2025 and the Formation Support Plan. The learnings about our parishes arising from the Parish Visitation Program are significant and future budgets will need to continue to support this program.



### Safeguarding

The Diocese meets the standards and reporting required for Safeguarding and is committed to providing financial redress and pastoral support where harm has been done to people by those who have been engaged in ministry. The formal avenues open to people who have been harmed are the [National Redress Scheme](#), [Pathways Victoria](#) and civil action through the courts.

### Cathedral Square

The planning permit has been obtained, commercial lease agreements with the Chocolatery and with CES Ltd are signed, and a private tender process for the build has commenced. The estimate for the build is between 18 months and 2.5 years. Leveraging loans against the commercial rents payable by tenants makes this project financially viable.

### **Communications Overview – Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst**

As a first step toward “developing and implementing an effective diocesan communication strategy” (*Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals*, 2.4) Katrina Strong presented a report to the Council. The report included: background information and data regarding the current communications landscape in Sandhurst (particularly the four main media channels currently in use), general information about communication trends in Australia and a demographic snapshot of the Diocese.

Geoff Gowdie led a listening and dialogue process with the Council. The data collected will assist understanding of the local context and contribute to the development of a diocesan communications strategy.

As communications is a specialised knowledge area, the services of a consultant will be sought to assist with preparing a strategy. It is likely that the communications consultant will meet with Council members online prior to the November meeting.

A Digital Strategy for the Chancery is in development. The Diocesan Communications Strategy will overlap and connect with it.

### **Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals: Draft Proposals for Formation**

Given the positive reception of the Draft Proposals for Formation by the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council and the Council of Priests, a Formation Support Plan based on the Proposals is in development. The Formation Support Plan will have a parish focus and will include adaptations for use with other Diocesan faith communities, e.g., schools.

Geoff Gowdie shared the next steps for the Formation Support Plan: *Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals* Familiarisation Workshops, Parish Based Planning Processes, Processes and Workshops for Synodal Decision-Making and Conversations in the Spirit, a Diocesan Formation Gathering, and Evangelisation and Formation for Young People through the Australian Catholic Youth Festival with pre- and post- festival formation for pilgrims and leaders.

Due to the integrated design and scope of the [Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals](#), a focus on a particular goal by a parish or faith community will almost inevitably lead to movement on one or more of the other goals.

### **Mission: One Heart Many Voices Conference Report**

Ten delegates from the Diocese attended the *Mission: One Heart, Many Voices Conference* in Sydney from 19-21 May, including five members of the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council. The Conference theme for 2025 “Choosing Hope, trust yourself to its leading” was inspired by the theme for the Jubilee Year “Pilgrims of Hope”. An article published in the [Sandpiper eNews \(30 May 2025\)](#) included reflections by delegates on the Conference experience. The five delegates on the Council each provided a brief report during the meeting. Bishop Shane commented that it was the first time he had attended a conference with a group, and he was encouraged by the support and energy of the group and found the formal and informal sharing of experiences during and after the Conference to be compelling. The decision to send ten delegates to the Conference was a strong witness by the Diocese.

### **Priests and Principals Dialogue Day (Shepparton, 14 May)**

The Dialogue Day provided a forum for Sandhurst priests and school principals to listen and dialogue about our shared mission. The agenda included: input on the reality of living the missionary imperative in our current social, cultural and religious context, an overview of CES Ltd governance and operations, an introduction to the *Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals*, and time allocated for priests and principals to review current Shared Mission Agreements between parishes and schools.

### **Sandhurst Youth Ministry**

The [2025 Australian Catholic Youth Festival \(ACYF\)](#) is being hosted by the Archdiocese of Melbourne in late November and early December. Sandhurst is planning for 200 pilgrims to attend ACYF including 150 young people (aged between 16 and 25) and 50 in leadership roles. The Diocese and CES Ltd are partnering to provide significant support for the ACYF pilgrimage, including formation, finance and logistics. An intentional formation plan is in development for all pilgrims and leaders in preparation for ACYF and as follow-up during 2026. Further information on the Sandhurst pilgrimage will be issued to parish priests, principals and other key contacts in the coming week.

### **Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited**

Kate Fogarty provided a brief update on CES Ltd and shared the following links with members of the Council:

- [HILDA Report](#)
- [Catholic Education Matters](#) podcast
- [Magnify Matters](#) podcast