
Around the Well

The Newsletter of Concerned Catholics
Tasmania

No 15 8 February 2022

From the Chair of CCT

First, my great hope is that 2022 will be kinder to you than 2021.

Second, I implore, beg, beseech, entreat and urge you to take up the opportunity to make your submission about a Synodal Church (walking and listening together) to the ACBC as outlined on page 2 **by 27 February 2022**. CCT is seeking your support of this Pope Francis generous initiative on Synodality. Given what seems to me to be our Archbishop's pedestrian support for the initiative, the ball is in our court.

Personally, these words of Joan Chittister prompt me:

"Don't be afraid to speak, be afraid what will happen to the whole truth if you don't" (Joan Chittister, in *On Women* edited by Sanchez-Small, Leathley, Kownacki, 2020).

This is an opportunity for you to let all Australian bishops know your views. My hope is that the Holy Spirit will give this Pope Francis initiative impetus through our Australian bishops.

We have added the CCT submission to our [website](#). Please feel free to borrow or even steal some or all of that text to help you make your submission. Please encourage each other. As the African proverb puts it *"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."* **Kim Chen**

Part Media Release – Concerned Catholics Canberra-Goulburn

"The Official Agenda for the First Assembly of the Plenary Council last October appeared to be consciously designed to avoid open, focussed discussion about the full inclusion of women in church decision-making and ministry. If not deliberate, then this omission revealed a serious blind-spot among officialdom towards the most important issue facing the church today. It must face this issue head on."

Do we agree?



Various quotes, one Gospel, one Pope.....

"A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not building bridges is not Christian. This is not in the Gospel."

"If one has the answers to all the questions - that is the proof that God is not with him. It means that he is a false prophet using religion for himself. The great leaders of the people of God, like Moses, have always left room for doubt. You must leave room for the Lord, not for our certainties; we must be humble."

"It is true that going out on to the street implies the risk of accidents happening, as they would to any ordinary man or woman. But if the church stays wrapped up in itself, it will age. And if I had to choose between a wounded church that goes out on to the streets and a sick, withdrawn church, I would definitely choose the first one."

"The Church must be a place of mercy freely given, where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live the good life of the Gospel."

Pope Francis Invites us to respond to the Synod on Synodality:

A major opportunity for Church Renewal and Reform Globally



The Synod on Synodality process requires submissions of **250 words maximum by 27 February 2022**. To make a contribution, (as a group or individually) click on this link - <https://www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>, which is the ACBC (Australian Catholic Bishops Conference) website where further information is available on the Synod. Scroll down to SUBMIT YOUR RESPONSE HERE and click. You will be asked to name your diocese to enable contributions to be connected to your diocese. The diocesan responses will be collated into a national response to go to Rome.

Want help with a few thoughts from CCT? CCT hopes for a Church which, amongst other things:

- implements and practises synodality at all levels;
- rejects all forms of discrimination, with equality for all the baptised;
- welcomes women and men equally into all its roles of leadership, ministry and service;
- is inclusive and listening in its leadership and decision-making;
- provides faith development opportunities for all in scripture, theology and liturgy;
- respects the centrality of personal responsibility and conscience to following Jesus;
- is seen to model the teachings of Jesus; and,
- actualises the vision of Vatican II for a truly synodal Church.

For more thoughts and help in preparing a submission by viewing the complete two page document, click [here](#).

Synodality, respecting the voice of every person....

Today Pope Francis is calling the Church to become a synodal Church in communion, participation, and mission.

In the Gospel, when Jesus gets lost in Jerusalem and the family is travelling with kinfolk in a caravan, the Greek word translated as 'caravan' is *synodia* (Luke 2:44). A synodal church is somewhat messy, but the people stick together and travel together. Their shared purpose and destination guide them.

The word 'synod' is related to the word 'method' but has a different focus. Method is focussed on efficiency and order. Everything is prescribed in writing, like a recipe. Synod, on the other hand, is guided by something much deeper, a shared Spirit. Synodality does not mean being disorganised, but it respects unity in difference and the voice of every person. Synodality is another word for solidarity and subsidiarity.

John Honnor
Dreaming as a Single Human Family

Committee Members

The Committee is keen to hear from those who have an interest in joining it in its work.

Recent developments in CCT

Matters considered since the last newsletter:

Little evident diocesan preparation for the Synod on Synodality We note with disappointment that only a few parishes have become involved in synodal gatherings and many have not. Thus, most have missed the opportunity for parishes “to encounter, experience and live out the synodal journey together...which will ultimately become the new style of the local Churches on the path of synodality”. (*Vademecum* for the Synod on Synodality, 3.1) Submissions from parishes and individuals are due by February 27th.

In addition, at 4.2, the *Vademecum* says:

“Finally, the Bishop convokes a Diocesan Pre-Synodal Meeting to culminate the diocesan phase and works with the Diocesan Contact Person(s) to organize it. This gathering should seek wide representation from across the diocese with the aim of coming together to pray, listen, reflect, and discern the synodal path along which God’s Spirit is calling the whole diocese.”

We are concerned that recent correspondence from the Archbishop suggests that there will not be open discussion or opportunity for discernment at the required Diocesan Pre-Synodal Meeting. This seems to contradict guidelines for such meetings (*Vademecum*, Appendix C). Nor is there any suggestion from the Archbishop that the faithful will see the diocesan submission, which is meant to include outcomes from the Diocesan Pre-Synodal Meeting. These issues will be followed up by CCT.

Vaccinations CCT continues to receive concerns regarding the decision by Catholic Education Tasmania to not follow the Education Department in mandating vaccinations for staff and finds it hard to agree with the Executive Director’s published statement that “everything that can be done to ensure the safety of our school communities is being done” (Mercury, Feb 3)

Membership We are very grateful to those who are subscribed members for their financial contribution to support the work of CCT. Renewal papers were sent out recently and we encourage you to continue your support, or to join if you have not done so to this point.



Upcoming ACCCR Webinar

Wednesday February 16th

ACCCR Zoom Webinar
Wednesday 16 February 7.30 to 8.30pm on the Synod on Synodality:

Explanation/summary of the *Preparatory Document* and the *Vademecum*.

Relevance of the SoS to the Church in Australia and the Australian Plenary Council.

Synodality at the local, community or parish level.

Introduction: Bishop Vincent Long

Presentation: Dr Elissa Roper, Australian Theologian “*It’s not too late: Synodality and change*”

Discussion: Elissa Roper, Andrea Dean, Kevin Liston

To register: Click [Free Registration](#). Further information www.acccr.com.au. A Zoom link will be sent on Feb 15th.

ACCCR UPDATE Jan 2022

Energy and Persistence – the ACCCR Approach to Plenary and Synod

Stage 1: Synod on Synodality (SoS)

A. Mail-out to 5,000 ACCCR subscribers, Bishops, Parish Priests and Religious Leaders about Synod invitation to make submissions. (see guide document link p2).

B. Zoom Convocation Wednesday 16 February on the Synod on Synodality.(side column p3)

C. Friday 25 February: ACCCR posts its 250-word contribution on the ACBC website.

Stage 2: Plenary Council (PC)

The Plenary Council organisers might not seek public consultation and feedback on the preparatory documents for the Second Assembly, due to be released in February. That should not prevent ACCCR from making its position known to both the organisers and the Catholic public, influencing and contributing to the agenda. Details will be forwarded later.

Stage 3: Synod and Council

Produce a comprehensive response to the SoS *Preparatory Document* and the *Vademecum*, and the SoS process in Australia, (in a submission directly to the Synod Secretariat in Rome with copy to local authorities). At least in part, this would reflect and state our relevant expectations for the Second Assembly of the PC, and will be shared at a Convocation.

Note: May 2022 Yarra Theological Union Conference *Light from the Southern Cross - Synodality and Leadership in the Church.* (online)
Trish Hindmarsh

Refugees and Asylum Seekers

As was well publicised in January, Novak Djokovic was quarantined for three days in the Park Hotel, Melbourne. As the waiting unfolded, the television cameras caught another drama, the plight of 30 asylum seekers also accommodated at the same hotel. Even more shocking was the revelation that the asylum seekers had been detained in Australia now since 2012

That same week, the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence & Trade Review Committee put out a damning Report that said Australia had failed to support thousands of interpreters and other Afghans who had risked their lives for the Australian Defence Forces. The Report made 8 Recommendations, one of which was to expedite and finalise Humanitarian Visa applications as quickly as possible. Up to December 2021, no Humanitarian Visas from Afghanistan had been processed. The Senate Report said: "People stood in harm's way while Australia was in Afghanistan, and we have left them there. This is totally dishonourable."

Not to be outdone, Immigration Minister Alex Hawke came in one hour after this Report making a policy announcement: Australia would prioritise the entry of 15,000 Afghan refugees over the next four years. Tim Costello reacted by saying; "This is not a compassionate response. It's just more spin to disguise the Morrison Government's complete inaction." Advocacy groups have called for a one off and immediate intake of 20,000 Humanitarian Visa holders from Afghanistan, in addition to Australia's existing cap of 13,750 places. Jesuit Fr Frank Brennan supports the intake of 20,000 Afghans which would symbolically recognise, he says, the 20 years Australian Defence Forces fought in Afghanistan.

Vin Hindmarsh