



MEDIA RELEASE

Raising the voices of Australian women preaching the Gospel

A new podcast *Australian Women Preach* will feature 30 Australian Christian women preaching the Gospel.

An initiative of Women and the Australian Church (WATAC) and the Grail in Australia, the podcast will highlight and share the voices of women breaking open the Word of God in ways that are meaningful to people today.

Australian Women Preach will launch on International Women's Day, 8 March 2021 and run the 30 weeks leading into the Australian Catholic Church's historic Plenary Council in October.

The podcast will feature diverse Australian women from across different Christian denominations. Each Monday an episode will be released with preaching on the following Sunday's Gospel.

The initial episode features Jacqui Remond, co-founder of the Global Catholic Climate Movement, and Joint Co-ordinator of the Vatican's COVID-19 Commission for the Ecology Taskforce.

Other early episodes will feature the preaching of Cristina Lledo Gomez, Patty Fawkner SGS, Melinda Jolly and Tau'alofa Anga'aelangi.

WATAC Chair Andrea Dean said the podcast grew out of a desire to share the gifts and wisdom of women who felt a deep calling to preach but did not always have those opportunities.

"We know women bring a unique perspective to the Gospel that is both theologically rich and grounded in their own life experiences," said Andrea.

"It is our hope to elevate those voices, and in doing so to renew the Church in Australia by modelling the Church we want to be: inclusive, diverse and welcoming."

Later this year, the Catholic Church in Australia will hold its Fifth Plenary Council. One of the topics the Australian Bishops have earmarked for discussion is how the Church might draw on the gifts and talents of all the people of God, including women.

"We hope the podcast will contribute to the Plenary process and have a prophetic impact on creating greater opportunities for women's voices to be heard in the Catholic Church," said Andrea.

Patricia Gemmell, a member of the Grail in Australia's National Leadership Team, who is one of the 30 women on the podcast, said many women felt a deep sense of calling to preach.

"St Paul tells us in *1 Corinthians 12* that in building up the Body of Christ, we are all called to discern our particular gifts and to use them for the good of all," Patricia said.

"Let us hear the voices of those God has gifted to preach, women included. It is our hope that we might hear anew God's message of love and peace for the world."

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Media Contact: Rebecca Beisler 0450 790 218

website: <https://australianwomenpreach.com.au>

email: australianwomenpreach@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AustralianWomenPreach>