
Around the Well

The Newsletter of Concerned Catholics
Tasmania

No 17 11 April 2022

From the Chair of CCT

We are now on the well-trodden path through the Paschal Mystery: the passion, death, resurrection and glorification of Jesus Christ. The turmoil of Good Friday awaits us.

Our turmoil pales into insignificance compared to that of Christ, abandoned by friends and fearing his Father had done the same. Our Ukrainian sisters and brothers are living in turmoil. The same goes for those in Lismore and thereabouts. Turmoil at every turn it seems.

Easter is a season for calming down and reflecting upon the immense love God has for us. Such pain and agony borne for us, not as a chastisement, but as a demonstration of love that offers freedom from the yokes that burden us. That sense is conveyed in part of Martin Luther King's famous speech.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last. Free at last. Thank God almighty, we are free at last."

On our local scene, you will read on Page 4 of this newsletter about frustrations from dealing with opaque Plenary and Synod processes, and our Archbishop's reluctance to enter into any meaningful dialogue with the faithful in Tasmania – our local sea of troubles.

May the joy and peace of Christ be with you

Kim Chen

Opinion Piece: Terry Fewtrell's (Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn) commentary on problems with the Plenary being exacerbated by the position of some bishops is accessed [here](#).

www.concernedcatholicstasmania.org



Come to hear Frank Brennan SJ

CCT is privileged to welcome Fr Frank Brennan AO, Jesuit priest, human rights lawyer and academic, as our guest speaker on

Saturday 7th May

Tairace Centre
1 Waterside Drive, Riverside,
Launceston

Commencing at 9.45 for 10am.

Fr Frank's address will be preceded by a (very) short AGM for CCT. His talk is entitled

The Plenary, the Church and the Public Square

and will be followed by questions and discussion. A 12.15pm finish is planned.

Fr Frank is also a *periti* (advisor) for the Plenary Council.

Further details can be found on the [website](#).

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Recent developments in CCT

The Committee of CCT met by Zoom on Monday 4th April 2022:

Annual General Meeting May 7th with Frank Brennan SJ The Annual General Meeting of CCT with Frank Brennan as guest speaker will be held in Launceston on Saturday May 7th at 9.45 for a 10am start. A short AGM at 10am will be followed by Frank Brennan's address titled *The Plenary, the Church and the Public Square*.

Letter to Archbishop The Committee received a response to its letter seeking clarification on several issues relating to our archdiocese. Many of our questions were not answered. See Page 4 for further information and links to our letter and the response. It was agreed that we will respond, expressing our disappointment and informing that we will be expressing our concerns to the ACBC.

ACCCR related matters. See page 3 of this newsletter.

Synod on Synodality As part of the response to our letter referred to above, we asked when the diocesan consultation for the Synod was to be held. We have now been informed that there will not be a consultation but there will be a 'liturgical celebration' of the Synod. CCT wonders what is being celebrated when the Synod has, on the whole, been ignored at parish and archdiocesan level in Tasmania.

Regional Spirituality Opportunities As part of its mission, CCT is keen to provide some opportunities for reflection and discernment. Details will be finalised shortly.

Membership Fees A reminder that membership fees for this year are now due. Thank you to those who have already contributed to support our work.

Email glitch Sue, our secretary, is reporting that some of our emails addressed to Bigpond addresses are bouncing. We are accessing software that should alleviate that problem shortly!

Federal Election An Election Kit 2022, looking at the election considering Catholic Social Justice principles, has been placed on our [website](#).

Next Meeting – your input? The next meeting of the committee is on Monday 23rd May. Should you wish any issue considered, please alert us: hello@concernedcatholicstasmania.org.au.

Subscription Reminder

The financial year for CCT is the calendar year so renewals are now due. New members who joined after June 2021 are not expected to pay again this year but we are very grateful to those members in this group who renewed anyway.

If you are a member who joined before 30 June 2021 and have not yet renewed, it would be good to hear from you soon. The annual fee is \$20, or \$50 should you be in a position to do this. The easiest way is a direct transfer to:

MyState: BSB: 807009
Account Number: 30130212
Account Name: Concerned Catholics Tasmania

or mail a cheque to the Treasurer – Donna McWilliam, 35 Riverview Rd, Riverside. 7250

or give cash to any committee member you may know and they will deal with it for you.

You should receive a receipt by email within a few days.

Not everyone on our mailing list is a financial member. We made an initial decision that it was important to spread the word as widely as we could, and membership could follow later (try before you buy!)

If, as some already have, you try to renew and but are not on our membership list, we will be in touch. New members are welcome at any time!

Australasian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform

Latest Plenary Document The document 'Towards the Plenary Council Second Assembly: a working document for members', (28 February 2022), was prepared by Plenary Council officials in the weeks since Christmas as a basis for members' discernment and for them to make written responses in the process of preparing final resolutions to be approved by the ACBC in May and voted on at the Second Assembly of the Plenary Council in early July. Members had until early April to offer their responses.

This latest document (30 pages) addresses four Themes: (A) A Deeper Communion Enriched by Diversity (Participation); (B) Ecclesial Leadership and Governance Growing as Disciples and Servants of the Gospel; (C) To Witness to Faith, Hope and Love as Missionary Disciples in the World; (D) To proclaim God's new creation as people of prayer, healing and hope (Reconciliation, compassion for the wounded, care for our common home). This latest document has not been made publicly accessible.

Proposal from ARC (Australian Reforming Catholics) for more formal structures for ACCCR. ARC, supported by three member groups, is urging consideration of a more formal structure for ACCCR, which to date has operated successfully on consensus and open dialogue to achieve much during the years of pre-Plenary preparation. ACCCR has grown from five to twenty member groups in recent years. Many online events (Convocations, Webinars) have been successfully offered. Submissions have been developed, and *A Better Church for All* published. Historically there has been a sense of shared purpose and harmony. Members express a strong hope that ACCCR will remain unified as a vital force for Church renewal and reform.

It was decided that, to avoid distraction from Plenary and Synod related matter, this issue should be put on hold for six months.

Second ACCCR Online Event for 2022 A second 2022 webinar was held on Thursday 31st March. John Warhurst, David Ranson and Ian Cameron (all Plenary Council Members), together with Trish Hindmarsh and Eleanor Flynn, discussed their responses to and hopes for the Plenary.

German Synodal Path

John Warhurst and Peter Johnstone (ACCCR reps) participated in a Zoom meeting hosted by two senior lay staff of the German Synodal Path, including renewal advocates from other countries. The ['Orientation Text'](#) expresses the matters underlying their focus.



We live with hope...

Hope means to keep living amid desperation and to keep humming in the darkness. Hoping is knowing that there is love; it is trust in tomorrow; it is falling asleep and waking again when the sun rises. In the midst of a gale at sea, it is to discover land. In the eyes of another it is to see that the other understands you. As long as there is still hope there will also be prayer.....and God will be holding you in his hands.

Turning to God in Hope - Henri Nouwen

The news is that God's wind is blowing,

It may be a breeze that cools and comforts,

It may be a gust that summons you to notice,

It may be a storm that blows you where you have never been before.

Whatever the wind is in your life, pay attention to it

Blown by God towards Newness - Walter Brueggemann

A disappointing response to our letter expressing concerns....

In our March newsletter, the Chair of CCT reported that we had written to the Archbishop seeking answers on matters of concern to CCT and many of the faithful in Tasmania. Many of our questions were relating to our understanding from official Church documents.

Below is a summary of the response received from Michael McKenna, Director of Chancery Services, writing on behalf of the Archbishop. The letter written and questions asked by us, and of the complete response received, can be accessed [here](#).

1. **Diocesan Pastoral Councils.** Direct questions seeking the pastoral reasons for not having a Diocesan Pastoral Council and about any progress in this direction were not answered. It seems that the Archbishop is not prepared to move ahead until he sees what everyone else is doing after the Synod (and the discernment time that will happen after that). We can expect no progress for a number of years.

2. **Implementation of recommendations from ACBC commissioned report on Church governance, *The Light from the Southern Cross*.** Direct questions asking what processes are in place to address the recommendations of the report for our archdiocese, or any progress on moving towards a synodal Church, were not answered. Despite many recommendations being within his episcopal responsibility, the Archbishop is not committing to progress until he sees what others are doing.

3. **Financial reporting to the faithful of the Archdiocese** No reason was given as to why there is not a practice of regular financial reporting providing transparency and accountability to the faithful of the archdiocese. The letter suggested this is under "active consideration" but highlights the need to be careful to ensure a balance between transparency and "commercial in confidence". This is a distraction. CCT is not suggesting that the faithful should have information on confidential contracts etc.

4. **Media and Communication** Questions regarding access to *The Standard* for other contributors, including to promote faith related events and suggesting a broader based advisory body, were not answered directly but there was a restatement of the position that *The Standard* is the official Church publication for the Archdiocese and should, by implication, only contain the official voice. The letter introduced the irrelevant matter of a 'glossy' being impractical. This is not what CCT requested. It seems that our Pope's call for open discussion and diverse opinions is not being heeded by our Archbishop.

5. **Preparation for Synod** In answer to a question seeking information on the way in which the Archdiocese is consulting to assist in preparation of the diocesan response to the synod, we were informed that no consultation is planned. Our question about how we will be informed of the contents of the diocesan submission was not answered.

CCT notes that the faithful were not given any information about the outcomes from the Plenary consultations held last year, nor about any submission sent to the Plenary from the Archdiocese which purported to represent our views. It seems that this will also be the case for the Synod.