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# Around the Well

The Newsletter of Concerned Catholics  
Tasmania

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## From the Chair of CCT

### The Advent call....

At 9.30pm on 19 September 2020 Pope Francis tweeted "We are called to be instruments of God our Father", which raises questions in my mind: Am I an instrument of God? How could I be an instrument of God?

Being an instrument of another necessitates either my own desires being stifled or aligning them with God's will. Being disciples (pupils of Christ) entails listening, hearing and studying what the Word has to say, preferably with others.

All of Pope Francis' tweet reads, "We are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what He dreamed of when He created it and correspond with His plan for peace, beauty and fullness." Collaboration, coordination and co-responsibility – hence church.

Right now, in this season of Advent, racing towards our annual celebration of the birth of Jesus through the instrument of Mary, what kind of instruments might we be?

Let's at least be instruments of God's mercy for others and ourselves. Better still, in this hectic season, why not follow the urging of St Francis of Assisi's prayer, which commences with "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace."

Here at *Concerned Catholics Tasmania Central*, our hope is that you and your family's plans correspond with His plan for "peace, beauty and fullness" and you are able to take hold of that and the hope it gives.

May that correspondence of plans bring you peace and a good measure of joy as we ponder the mystery of the incarnation and venture into 2023.

**Kim Chen**

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### Pope Francis quoting Pope Paul VI on the need for renewal

*"The Church must look with penetrating eyes within herself, ponder the mystery of her own being. This vivid and lively self-awareness inevitably leads to a comparison between the ideal image of the Church as Christ envisaged her and loved her as his holy and spotless bride (cf. Eph 5:27), and the actual image which the Church presents to the world today ... This is the source of the Church's heroic and impatient struggle for renewal: the struggle to correct those flaws introduced by her members which her own self-examination, mirroring her exemplar, Christ, points out to her and condemns."*

Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* (26), quoting Pope Paul VI Encyclical Letter *Ecclesiam Suam* (6 August, 1964)

## Recent developments in CCT

The Committee of CCT met by Zoom on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November

**Synod update** The committee received an update on the Continental Stage of the pre-Synod process. See the ACCCR Report, Page 3.

**Committee Membership** Cathy Sullivan has joined the CCT Committee, increasing the southern representation by 33.3%! Thanks Cathy!

**Visit by Nuncio** Unfortunately, CCT was unable to arrange a time to meet with the Nuncio during his recent visit. However, Chair Kim Chen has been able to establish a good connection by a phone call and a "sideline meeting" (to use international summit parlance!) at the recent St Francis Xavier Church anniversary celebrations. The Nuncio has received our submission regarding the process of appointment of our next Archbishop.

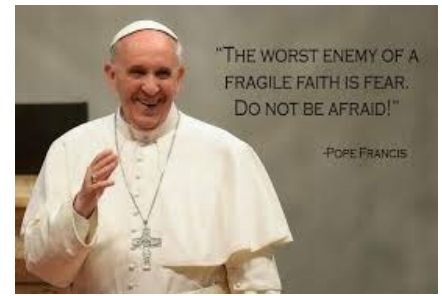
**Voice to Parliament** Kim Chen advised that, on behalf of CCT and the Burnie/Wynyard Parish, he has contacted Indigenous representatives, including people from Reconciliation Tasmania and NATSICC. The Committee discussed how awareness can be raised among the Catholic laity about the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Our hope is that our Church will embrace the Voice as a matter of justice, and not avoid it, claiming it as a political issue.

**The Profile of CCT** Our mailing list now has over 320 addresses, and in many cases there is more than one interested party at that address!

**2023 Plans** CCT is considering issues for 2023, including a continuing focus on the Synod on Synodality, the treatment of LGBTQIA+ people by the institutional Church, progress on an indigenous voice to parliament, continuing the story of *Laudato Si'*, and the rightful place of the laity in our Archdiocese. Details of gatherings will come shortly. (Unfortunately, Covid delayed a few 2023 planning sessions!)

**Campaign for Refugees** As reported previously, CCT has [written](#) to Tasmanian Senator Anne Urquhart, asking her to encourage her party to support initiatives of the Refugee Council of Australia to assist refugees and asylum seekers. We received a vague and non-committal reply. This will be followed up.

**Congratulations** The Committee has written on behalf of CCT to congratulate Mark Gaetani on this appointment as National President of the St Vincent De Paul Society. The Society gives us a powerful model of lay leadership and mission within the Catholic Church!



### Pope Francis on the need for parish self-renewal and constant adaptability

*"The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. ... if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be "the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters". This presumes that it really is in contact with the homes and the lives of its people, and does not become a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few.*

*The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God's word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration."*

(cont. overpage)

**Next Meeting – your input?** The next Committee meeting is on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2023. Ideas to [hello@concernedcatholicstasmania.org.au](mailto:hello@concernedcatholicstasmania.org.au).

## Australian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform (ACCCR) Report

**Review of ACCCR** At the Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the ACCCR Reps, it was decided that a Review of the Coalition would take place. Terms of Reference were prepared and membership of the Review Group agreed, as follow:

Kim Chen (Concerned Catholics Tasmania)  
Vee Pols (South Australian Catholics for an Evolving Church)  
Christina Reymer (Be the Change NZ)  
Eleanor Flynn (ACCCR Co-Convenor)  
Bronwyn Seaborne (Concerned Catholics Wollongong)  
Trish Hindmarsh Co-Chair (Concerned Catholics Tasmania)  
Kevin Liston, Co-Chair (SA Catholics for an Evolving Church)  
Peter Johnstone (ACCCR Co-Convenor)  
David Timbs (Catholics for Renewal)  
Kevin Bourke (Concerned Catholics Wollongong)

The work of the Review Group began on Nov 14<sup>th</sup> and there have been four meetings to date, with members working as synodally as possible to redraft the Call Statement (Vision, Mission and Aims of the Coalition) and draft guidelines for renewed Structure/Procedures to better equip us to carry forward the significant work of Church renewal and representation of the laity.

A final Report with draft recommendations was discussed at ACCCR on December 8<sup>th</sup> and now member groups will be invited early in the new year to provide their feedback on the recommendations. An ongoing process...

**Continental Synodal Process** Trish Hindmarsh has been keeping the Committee fully briefed on progress with the Synod. In her words: *"The Synod preparation is gaining momentum...articles and videos found on the Vatican News website help make progress on the Synod come alive for us, in full colour!"*

ACCCR is preparing a response to the [Continental Synodal Process](#) document released after the meeting attended by high profile Australian Catholics Susan Pascoe and Fr Ormond Rush (Australia) in Italy. Susan has reported (at the link below) on her experience of being one of the 50 people at the Frascati meeting in October. They read and discerned the content of submissions from around the world, and then drafted the pre-Synod document, based on the Continental Reports. "What an honest, authentic, rigorous, prayerful process this was...", Susan said of the Synod process thus far ([click](#) for link).



### Pope Francis on the need for parish self-renewal and constant adaptability (cont.)

*"In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelisers. It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach. We must admit, though, that the call to review and renew our parishes has not yet sufficed to bring them nearer to people, to make them environments of living communion and participation, and to make them completely mission-oriented."*

Pope Francis in his 2013 Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), paragraph 28.

**ACCCR (cont.)** These short videos are also well worth a look, especially the last on women:

<https://youtu.be/GogES77VuCM>, <https://youtu.be/0VazX8aRIKA>, <https://youtu.be/k5oPj2UCF6U>

The extract below is from an article by Salvatore Cernuzio, speaking of the content and scope of the Synod document:

*'Here are the poor and the indigenous, families, remarried divorcees and single parents, LGBTQ people, and women who feel excluded. Here are the victims of abuse or trafficking or racism. Here are priests, laicized priests, and lay people; Christians and those 'distant' from the Church, those who want reforms on priesthood and the role of women, and those who "following the liturgical developments of the Second Vatican Council, do not feel at ease." Here are those who live in countries of martyrdom, those who deal daily with violence and conflict, those who fight against witchcraft and tribalism. In short, here within the approximately 45 pages that make up the Document for the Continental Stage (DCS) is the whole of humanity, with its wounds and fears, its imperfections and demand'.*

Groups from a cross section of the Church have been invited to make responses to the Continental Phase document before the end of the year. CCT had a small group committed to study the document and prepare a [response](#).

**Visiting Speaker** Sr. Nathalie Becquart, XMCJ, undersecretary to the Synod of Bishops, will be speaking in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide in late January and early February on her way to a meeting with Oceania bishops in New Zealand regarding the Synod. Some of those events may be broadcast. Keep an eye out for emails from CCT when we have details at hand.

## **A Reflection - Richard Rohr encourages trust in the mystery of faith.....**

"Our faith also offers us a foundational belief that life is a succession of dyings and risings. At the centre of the Eucharist, we proclaim, "Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again."\* That is the saving pattern! It is not a mystery of faith; it is *the* mystery of faith. It will never change. But Western people, trained in the philosophy of progress and problem-solving, don't really believe that anymore. We much more believe that we can overcome the paschal mystery. That we can create a family, a parish, a church, an institution, a country that will not have to go through the dying of things.

It's not true! It's not true that everything's getting better and better. That fallacy is being taken away from us. But we can return to the pattern of our faith and the pattern of reality: that things die and things resurrect and both are good teachers. Christ must be recognized and welcomed in both places—in the dying of things, and in the ecstasy and the loveliness of things.

The way down always teaches us. We need times where the soul is broken and we need some place we can go and weep and mourn. But we must have healthy people there who don't let us sink into that negativity as a way of life. As people of the church, we are called to be agents of transformation who witness and accompany change with the wisdom of the soul.

Jesus never told us to put our trust in the larger institutions of culture or even the church. That doesn't mean they are bad or that we should abandon them, but we must recognize that they are also subject to the paschal mystery, the dying and the rising of all things. And I think we must be honest that we're at the downside of the curve. All the indices suggest that we are at the end of the dominance of the United States, Western civilization, and even of Christianity. The question becomes: What will we do about it?"

Conference Presentation, 1993 *Creating a Church for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

*\*in the liturgy at the time of his presentation*