

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE PLENARY COUNCIL FOR ACTION

How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is prayerful and Eucharistic?

For our Church throughout the world

- Some Catholics for various reasons are currently excluded from receiving the Eucharist. We recommend changing current Church laws concerning this matter in order that all Catholics, who faithfully and in good conscience wish to receive the Eucharist, are able to do so.
- We recommend that the Church actively welcomes to its celebration of the Eucharist other baptised Christians who have a full understanding of and belief in the Eucharist, as an opportunity to give thanksgiving to God.

For our Australian Church

- In light of our belief that the Eucharist is “an action of thanksgiving to God”, we recommend that the Catholic Church in Australia welcomes Christian partners in marriage to the Eucharistic table. In particular we recommend that pastoral guidelines for the admission of non-Catholic partners in inter-denominational marriages to Communion be established, similar to the German Bishops’ model as documented in the paper ‘Walking with Christ in footsteps of unity: mixed marriages and common participation in the Eucharist’. February 20, 2018
- We recommend the further development of authentic faith teaching in Catholic schools. *We request more education about the Eucharist to our teachers, students and in our parishes, which is currently available or could be developed.*
- We recommend that the Church’s teachings be comprehensively reviewed so that they better reflect Christ’s teachings, so that we may feel more fully the greatness of God in our lives and that the Mass is central to our way of life. The Church needs to return to being servant to the poor as Christ taught us. In particular, to further embrace our faith, we need to understand the nature of prayer, both personal and communal, which will help us to develop a closer relationship with God.
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- We recommend that the Church actively welcomes to its celebration of the Eucharist other baptised Christians who have a full understanding of and belief in the Eucharist, as an opportunity to give thanksgiving to God.

Local actions for the parish of St Thomas the Apostle

- *We recommend that the parish be more welcoming in our services, in particular for baptisms. Regarding baptisms, we would have an estimated 50% Catholics at these services, and of the attending Catholics, probably 90% of these are non-regular attendees at Mass. In order to help all participants to feel comfortable and included, we believe that we need to provide some relevant dialogue about the service. We propose a Commentator be provided to introduce the service, and to welcome the congregation and provide an outline of the service. We should also either provide prompt cards for the responses to be said, or make more use of the digital screens for the same purpose.*
- *We recommend that homilies provided by priests with English as a second language be prepared and presented on the digital screens as appropriate, to enable a meaningful appreciation and reflection on the homilies by all parishioners.*
- *We request more education about the Eucharist to our teachers, students and in our parishes, which is currently available or could be developed.*
- We recommend that there is a review of the formation of Special Ministers, including the training provided to current Ministers, in order to develop an ongoing formation program.
- We recommend that a short prayer be included in the Parish Bulletin on a regular basis relevant to the liturgical season. ‘The Way’ Prayer Group has been approached to provide these prayers.
- **To assist in the telling of the story of Jesus and to rebuild reverence, we recommend that the following steps should be taken:**
 - **Reposition the tabernacle to a front, central position in the church as it is the centre of our faith. If not practicable, relocate the tabernacle temporarily for the celebration of the Eucharist.**
 - **Return the Stations of the Cross into the church so that the story of Jesus is visible to children and the wider congregation.**
 - **Review all aspects of the art work in and around the church, in particular the painting of Our Lady.**

There were strong opposing views to this recommendation and it will require further discussion and deliberation outside this forum at the local level.