

## **PLENARY COUNCIL 2020 DEVELOPMENT**

Plenary2020 is the first Plenary Council since before Vatican II, and so is a unique, once in a lifetime opportunity for you to be involved in the process to make major changes for the better in the way our Church thinks and works. We are the Church.

### **Phase 1**

This process officially started when after an extensive time of deliberation, our Australian Bishops proposed a Plenary Council be held in Australia to engage the Australian people to focus on what the Holy Spirit is asking of the Church in Australia today, in light of social values evolving in our community and in the need to address a serious breakdown of trust, and the need for governance to be greatly improved.

Pope Francis gave his approval, and the first phase in 2018/2019 was a listening and dialogue process where Australians were asked to voice their stories and share their concerns. It was our job to listen to those concerns, write them up and pass them on to a national committee who collated the responses into six themes. There were 220,000, responses received by the National Plenary Facilitation Committee including submissions from the Plenary groups that met in our own Parish and we thank you deeply for that.

### **Phase 2**

Phase two in 2019/2020 was a process of Communal Discernment on each of the six themes and again groups in our own parish met to pray and consider each theme. The discernment process resulted in proposed actions both national and local being submitted to the National Facilitation Committee. Our parish's submissions are available for you to view on your request via this website.

A national writing group for each of the themes considered all the national and local actions and proposals for change, and delivered a Discernment Paper on each theme. These will form the agenda for the Plenary Council of Bishops and lay people. Their assembly has been delayed because of COVID19 to October 2021 and again in July 2022. The Discernment Papers are available for all to read online at <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>

### **Phase 3**

The next phase will include preparation towards the first Plenary Council Assembly. It is a time for the delegates selected to sit on the Assembly to prepare and an opportunity for Australians to further consider the Discernment Papers which reflect the original concerns expressed by the people of Australia. We urge you to take advantage of this opportunity.

They are necessarily lengthy and for that reason we have prepared a summary of them, with a subject index for ease of access to any area which interests you in particular. This summary will be made available to you if you request via this website.

### ***What we are doing as partnered parishes:***

As the final meeting of the Plenary Council is now two years away due to the virus, the facilitators of the Plenary groups from our partnered parishes are meeting to think together about what the steps might be for our three parishes. Presently, we are looking at local changes that we may be able to suggest initiating from the list of suggestions that have come from our own parishioners. We have had two meetings to set up those proceedings and will keep you posted regularly on each step we take and your input and involvement is critical to a successful outcome.

***May God bless you***

***The Facilitator Group***