

Plenary Council

Parish Liturgy Team

What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?

- To make the church morally cleansed
- Forgiveness
- To become an active member of the community
- To live as Jesus taught us in relation to others
- To trust and be confident in the power of the Holy Spirit
- To live the commandment to love god and one another and so by doing God's word
- To be a Jesus centred church
- Patience
- To be open to change
- To be contemporary with our language and our liturgy
- To make the church more relevant esp to younger people
- To speak up
- To be part of a community sharing the same ideals
- To be accepting
- To consider all the groups from different cultures and the way we can incorporate everyone
- To be adults who accept adult responsibility
- To listen
- To broaden our definition of clergy
- To reconsider the place of the laity, especially women in church governance ✓
- To understand that we are the church
- To be a democratic and transparent church
- We need genuine and true leadership while we ordinary Catholic are pushing from the bottom
- To allow more of the laity to be ordained
- To deal with tough issues

Our story/experience:

- What is our role now -our church is more than just the priest, more than just God. How we live our lives as a child of God is important. We set the example by what we do. When you are in hospital there are loads of people who come to visit you once you tick the box that says you are Catholic. Their role is very important and that needs to be reflected in our governance. It's more than just the priests and the archbishops that need to make our church better
- We are the church. My experience with friends who have been Catholics for a long time, still think of them (the clergy) and us as the way our church runs. We are not just spectators on a Sunday. They do not see themselves as involved. Those who were fortunate enough to have their world shaken after Vatican II got to understand change. There are still people who stand back and expect others to lead. They are good Catholic people who still have the sense of them and us. It's what we do that make it the church. But it's difficult to talk like that without seeming critical
- There are still a lot of people that think of them and us. Perhaps it is our job to change that. It is our job to do - not just preach. E.g. those that go into war torn place don't preach they patch people's wounds. Maybe we need to get these people to get in and do things and maybe this will help their thinking. I have been involved in doing things so I don't think of them and us. Perhaps we are missing out on altar servers who feel like they are doing things even though.
- The term good Catholics is interesting and the term laity - who does that encompass. Our church breeds prejudice, models intolerance and attempts to justify discrimination and I don't want to belong to a church that is complicit in the marginalisation of minority groups esp LGBTQI people

and indigenous. Jesus talks about the dignity of all humanity esp those who are marginalised. When we say all are welcome what do we really mean. I want to belong to a church that excludes no-one. At our Easter service a few months ago we prayed for our holy father pope Francis and a universal church who excludes no-one, our dispossessed indigenous community and we also prayed that we stood beside those people who are harshly excluded by our church. It is through my upbringing that it makes me feel that it is important to affirm everyone. When we talk about good Catholics what do we really mean?

- Good question - Good Catholic - what is it? Does it mean that we need to subscribe to the hierarchy of the church. Or can we belong by following Jesus. Young people do not subscribe to the hierarchy but they do want to include minority groups. We need to wrestle with these theological questions. Is there only one model? Why does it have to be a hierarchy why can't it be a horizontal model. While we have this hierarchical model nothing will change. So what do we do? Do we break away. I still feel like a Catholic and want to be part of Jesus teaching but I do not want to buy into the model we have. Young people won't buy into that model.
- Who defines good Catholic and good Catholic behaviour. About who is allowed to go to communion, what do we confess. Do we have to be a member of the church or a Catholic on our own. It is hard for people who have been passive in the church to deal with this. This is stressful for some. Clarification needs to be made about what constitutes a good Catholic. What are our obligations, what is allowable and what is not allowable. Some people don't go to church very often but still receive communion. This used to be a mortal sin. The young people have thrown this to the wind - is that OK. Archbishop Pell refused to give communion to those who wore the rainbow sash. Was this acceptable. The top down model is very confusing and needs clarification. Some decisions need to be made
- Think back to the pill - and people just ignore that. The same has happened with communion. Who needs to make these decisions.
- I think that it is uncomfortable and I would prefer to be clear but I think the Holy Spirit is asking us to not know and to be in a mess but to be struggling with issues and not to put them under the carpet. We need to stick with the difficult issues. We need to hear anger and frustration and it is great to hear it around this table. God creates in chaos and confusion and this is a wonderful time. Let's not run away from it but also take it slowly. Let's not leave anyone behind but keep working at being inclusive. It is uncomfortable.
- I look around as a lay person and see so many different people. Many of whom I know and younger than me who present their children for sacraments but I do not see many who are teenagers and young adults and this is very troubling and I agree with some of the things that have been said before. But our young do not see the inclusion in our church. We have to acknowledge these differences and include them in our church. I come from a multicultural background and see so many people from different cultures who bring their baggage and perhaps see our church in a different way. The Italian church community is so different from our community. Do we include all voices in the governance of the church?
- Democratic and transparent church - immediate thought was to reject democratic. To be part of a church that shares ideas - I can't agree with that. We are different and have different ideas. We have to face outwards. Part of me want to reject the current structure and the clericalism of it. May have forgotten that baptism is the primordial sacrament. We seem to have a transfer of power from one unfortunate group to another. We need to learn to listen to one another.

Questions:

- Can you as church give a positive and compassionate direction to the diverse groups of people in our country?
- Will women have the opportunity to be ordained into the priesthood in the future?
- Is the plenary council genuinely going to act on what is discovered?

- How do we encourage listening so that the church creates an atmosphere in which baptised catholics listen to one another in the mess of different ideas?
- How do we reach out to the younger people to embrace them and participate in their faith as young people in our church?
- Is there any topic that will be banned from discussion? And who decides this?
- Why is the church continuing to discriminate against over 50% of the church by not allowing them to be ordained?
- Where does all this go? When the plenary council decides on something, what happens next? What if the pope says no?
- How do we help one another be good news for all?
- What power does the council actually have to effect change?
- Who decides and how do they decide what changes are worthy to be implemented?
- Can we allow our clergy to marry?
- How can the church in Australia improve the way we communicate from the top to the bottom?
- Will the plenary council sessions be streamed to the public?
- Can we change the decision making models in our church to include lay people?
- How is the plenary council going to change the operation of the church to ensure the child sex abuse situation or anything similar CANNOT happen again?
- Can we change the way we think about sin?