

Plenary Working Document

(Instrumentum Laboris)

“Continuing the Journey”

The above document referred to has been produced and published by the Plenary Council Writing Group and seeks to offer an account of what the people of God expressed in the Listening and Dialogue and Listening and Discernment Phases of the Plenary Council journey. It is available on the Plenary Council website – www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au under discernment, for reading in full .

Plenary Working Document - Problems and Proposals

This addendum (Plenary Working Document - Problems and Proposals)—presented below-- highlights the subjects relating to the problems and proposals raised in the main document, and indicates the relevant paragraphs .It is essential that these paragraphs relating to a particular subject are perused in order to understand the full extent of the subject matter.

It is felt Chapter 2 (Theological Reflection”) of the main document does not lend itself to be summarized, or abridged in any way, as it presents a picture of the rationale for the goals of our church as we want it to be, and every paragraph needs to be given the respect of a deep discernment. The practical ways to achieve these goals are proposed in the other chapters.

Para	Subject	Proposal
28-33	Behavioral changes In the Church	see further
35-38	Cultural diversity	Along with the Latin Church, the Eastern Catholic Churches are an integral part of the Church in Australia. Pope Francis’ call to” welcome, protect, promote and integrate” encourages us to...promote intercultural understanding...
39-40	Indigenous Catholics	A more informed engagement, built on the foundation of understanding...towards a new path of healing which is an urgent task.
41-42	Lay Catholics	The Plenary Council may promote further engagement by lay Catholics in leadership and service throughout our community

- 43-46 Challenges for Parishes
And Dioceses
Decline in the number of Mass attenders and young people engaged in the Parish community is particularly concerning. Newer ways of being parish are needed to support younger generations engaging online and through schools and universities. New models are needed. Finances constrain many of our Dioceses and parishes and threaten their sustainability. A review of Diocesan boundaries is suggested...to address these challenges.
- 47-49 A decline in the number
Of Catholics celebrating
The Sacrament of penance
is an Example of the decline
in acceptance of the
Church's teachings
There is a crucial need, therefore, for vocational discernment and ongoing formation. Preaching is another area that many see as needing renewal
- 50 ...respect for the ordained
priesthood has diminished
among many...can leave
many priests feeling
disillusioned, compromising
their effectiveness in
mission
See further
- 51 Relationships between
Bishops and priests
Greater caution must be exercised to prevent the misuse of institutional power, while at the same time, promoting harmonious relationships
- 51-53 In some parts of the
Church there is unease
about relations between
laity and clergy...
There is a desire for consultative and collaborative approaches to governance
- 34,54, 55 Women
An expansion of the roles of women across the Church is needed

56 – 58	Youth	Young Catholics need assistance to face the challenges of discipleship
59- 62	sexuality	New ways of marriage modeling Church’s vision of sexuality, married life, abortion, contraception, reproductive technologies and euthanasia are urgently needed
63	Covid 19	Covid 19 has paved the way for discovery of new pastoral needs and opportunities for mission and discipleship through technology
64	Environment	The Church can become more open to ecological conversion
104	Healing wounds	Identify ways in which the Church can effect a pastoral conversion to one centred in Christ, the great healer of the wounds of humanity. This must be the Church’s vocation in our day.
106, 107	Sexual abuse	The healing of survivors must be accompanied by our mutual care and support for each other.
108–111	Lifestyle v Church teaching	The primary focus of the Plenary Council is the effectiveness of the Church’s pastoral response in its mission of proclaiming and living the Gospel
112	Governance	The exercise of authority, leadership and governance is touched on directly in “Light from the Southern Cross”
113,114	Church culture	The issue of culture within the Church arises as a central concern for the Royal Commission and will need to be examined.
115–117	Governance	The Governance Review (Light from the Southern Cross) identifies synodality as essential in promoting inclusion and co responsibility in the exercise of governance. This includes the opening more of the gifts, of charisms and contributions of women in leadership and decision making.
118 – 122	Ordained ministry	Support the renewal of the life and ministry of service of the ordained members of the Church. The Plenary

		Council could explore measures to better support deacons, priests and bishops in their ministry.
123-125	Clericalism	The Plenary Council might consider ways in which the formation, resourcing and support of clergy and religious can be enhanced at a national, diocesan and parish level
126	Co-responsibility	Explore ways in which co-responsibility might be formalized and expanded and the ways in which women in particular might be more fully involved in all aspects of the Church's life while upholding the Church's teachings on the nature of ordained ministry in the Catholic Church.
130-134	Missionary disciples	There is not a well- developed understanding and practice of the Church as a community of missionary disciples. The Plenary Council offers the Church in Australia an opportunity to consider ...what steps must be taken to awaken this awareness of the missionary vocation of every Catholic.....renew the formation of children, young people and families who may not be strongly connected to the Church, but who still have an "instinct for the faith"...to encounter people where they are...(and to)strengthen the bonds of communion.. between the various Churches in Australia who are in communion with Peter.
135-138	Eucharist	One of the challenges for the Plenary Council might well be that of determining how we might better welcome God's people to the Eucharist and assist them to understand what this sacrament offers, entails and asks of those who receive it.
139	Prayer	The Plenary Council might consider ways in which the spiritual lives of Catholics can be further nurtured through the discovery or re-discovery of "schools of prayer"
144-145	Young people	...the need for renewed attention to the place and promise of young people in the Church,and a greater focus on the family

146	Young people	Identifying and forming those who are suited to ministry with young people must be a priority. The identity, mission and evangelizing capacity of Catholic education in Australia should be examined with candour and courage if they are to bring people closer to Christ and His plan for their lives.
147-150	Marriage	...The need for “remote “ formation of young people in the Christian understanding of marriage, more “ proximate “ formation for engaged couples, and support for the newly married and young families in their efforts to pass on the faith..
151-153	Engaging with Society	...calls for a new enthusiasm and creativity by all Catholics to develop “a conscious attitude of engaging positively with society” (.. through a ministry of service..)
154	Church’s engagement with Society	The presence of the Holy Spirit assures us that through patient and courageous discernment Catholic communities can serve the genuine development of Australian society by living out the caritas (love) of God for people and for the earth in the veritas (truth) the gospel reveals to us.
155-159	Public engagement	...papal teaching has identified the goal of the Church’s service to society as “the integral human development of societies “and the “responsible care for all creation”. The Cardijn method of social reflection in the light of the gospel...continues to offer a rich resource..in discerning concrete acts of engagement and service in society
160-161	Collaboration	There is a call for greater efforts in collaboration between Church communities and agencies to build “a community of shared endeavor and a sense of shared service
162-164	Evangelisation	The National Consultation expressed a deep desire within the catholic community to share with all people and all creation the good news of God’s love,

	enfleshed in Jesus Christ crucified and risen, and powerfully active through the Holy Spirit. In many ways, the Church is deeply wounded, and in need of the healing love of its Lord. We will only find this healing by going out to others.	
165-167	Listening and care	Central to this gospel inspired mission of healing and mercy is the culture of 'listening and dialogue'. Within the Catholic community many voices call for this pastoral response. This culture of listening and care must extend beyond the boundaries of the Church to the lives of all Australians.
168-173	Change of era	The deep and pervasive social changes of today's world affect the Church in its structures, just as it affects Catholics in the way they live their faith in everyday life. Catholic communities and agencies are challenged to proclaim the gospel within a digital culture, applying the ethical principles of catholic social teachings to the digital world
174-175	Resourcing the Mission	To be effective, the Church's mission of evangelization must be supported by human, physical and financial resources. Considerable inequity exists among the resources available to Catholics in different parts of the country. The National Consultation calls for a "spirit of financial co-operation among Church Authorities in order to move towards a "shared missionary endeavor " The Plenary Council offers a unique opportunity to foster (this) collaboration.
176-179	First Peoples	The Plenary Council may prioritise the question of how the Church can include and empower First peoples to take their place more fully within Church and society
180-181	Abuse victims	The National Consultation calls for even greater efforts...to strengthen the Church's role as a champion for the safety of children, young people and more vulnerable adults in society. The Plenary Council is an opportunity to celebrate and enhance examples of 'good practice'..

182-183	The unborn, disabled and dying	The Church upholds the moral prohibition on the taking of innocent life. The Catholic community must be a voice for these voiceless groups.
184	Homeless and those suffering with mental illness	..in each case we acknowledge failures of reverence and support in our community
185	Refugees and others	The Plenary Council may rededicate the Church in Australia to the service of all those described by Jesus as "the least of these my sisters and brothers"
186-19	Care for our common home	The Church hears the cries of the poor and the groans of the earth. With the covid pandemic the Church in Australia is called to renew its service to society by both promoting and modelling this commitment to an integral ecology based on the Gospel of life.