

ADELAIDE DIOCESAN ASSEMBLY RESOURCES (Sep 2021)

Dear Parishioners,

The following is from the resources of the diocesan assembly to be held in Sept 2021. You can access the details from the archdiocesan website. If you wish to express your ideas on any of the themes or questions, please use the link provided in the diocesan assembly website or write to enquire@salcath.org.au, marking your email as Diocesan assembly 2021 on or before 16th September 2021, and we will report it to the assembly.

Blessings and prayers

Salisbury Parish Team

Diocesan Assembly Themes and Questions

Themes:

- Inclusion and Healing
- Leadership and Leadership Formation
- Faith Formation and Spiritual Development
- Parish Life and Liturgy
- A Church that Responds to the Cry of the Earth and the Cry of the Poor
- Outreach and Accompaniment with Children, Families and Young People

About this document: The Diocesan Assembly Themes have been developed from the local consultations for the Plenary Council and Diocesan Assembly. These themes reflect the agenda for the Plenary Council with an emphasis on the matters that members of the Archdiocese of Adelaide have indicated are most important to them. *Parishes, schools, communities, agencies, and individuals not attending the Diocesan Assembly may also use this document to reflect on the themes and engage in their discernment for action.*

Theme One: Inclusion and Healing

Overarching Question:

How can we become a humble, healing, and merciful Church that brings the Good News of Jesus Christ to those

who have felt excluded, have been hurt or felt judged as not worthy to belong?

From the Consultations

How can we be a more welcoming and inclusive Church?" with particular emphasis on Aboriginal people, women, LGBT+ persons, Migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, people with differing abilities, divorced Catholics and those who have left the Church. Protection for the vulnerable, the unborn, those in poverty, people living with illness, and the elderly, as important issues. We need to acknowledge our part in the abuse and harm of vulnerable people and children, particularly regarding clergy sexual abuse, bullying, and institutional abuse of Aboriginal peoples.

Questions to consider:

- When we think about our Church (our parishes, schools, services) which groups of people are missing or who do we see as underrepresented
- How might the Church in the Adelaide Archdiocese meet the needs of the most vulnerable, go to the margins, and be the presence of Christ in places that may be overlooked or left behind in South Australia today? How might we partner with others to do this?
- How might we approach matters such as family planning and contraception, relationship breakdown, living together without marriage, remarriage after divorce, and gender and sexual identity, with merciful, non-judgmental Gospel love?
- How might the Archdiocese be open to Aboriginal ways of being Christian, including spirituality, theology, liturgy, and missionary

discipleship? How might we learn from the First Nations peoples?

- How might the Church work with our First Nations Peoples to acknowledge past hurts and walk together on a path towards reconciliation?
- How might we heal the wounds of abuse in all its forms, coming to see through the eyes of those who have been abused?
- Could an Archdiocesan-led process of acknowledging the damage and hurt caused by clerical sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults contribute to healing?
- What suggestions do you have about the elements that such a process could include?
- What responses might individual parishes, schools and organizations make to support an Archdiocesan process?

Theme Two: Leadership and Leadership Formation

Overarching Question:

How could changes in our leadership models build a more vital, more relatable Church responsive to the times? How do we best form people for these leadership roles?

From the Consultations: - a great concern for issues relating to clergy, particularly the priesthood- worried about the decreasing number of active clergy and low numbers of those entering the seminary- Clericalism and bullying, of both lay and ordained- Perception that parish priests to be overworked, and stretched-priesthood to be reimagined by being inclusive of married men, ordination of women, and laity- Several people expressed gratitude for the missionary and international priests serving in parishes in the Archdiocese -Greater understanding of the role of the laity in church leadership, particularly for women and young people, and seeking greater collaboration between lay and ordained leaders. Respondents also asked for guidance regarding pastoral

councils, transparency of Church authorities and governance, and a more visible presence of the archbishop in the diocese.

Questions to Consider:

- What could the Adelaide Archdiocese do to increase the number of laywomen and men and ordained ministers in leadership roles within the Church?
- What new or refreshed formation programs are needed to support lay and ordained leaders, and how might these be resourced and supported?
- How might formation, both pre-and post-ordination, better foster the development of bishops, priests and deacons who enable the full participation of all the baptized in all aspects of Church life?

Theme Three: Faith formation and Spiritual development

Overarching Question:

How do we build an informed and educated Catholic community that has a meaningful spiritual relationship with God?

From the Consultations:

A deep longing for faith formation and spiritual guidance. -resources and multi-modal learning opportunities to be provided at diocesan, deanery, parish, home, and individual levels. -religious education in Catholic schools, catechetical programs, scripture study, theological education, Catholic social teaching, spiritual direction, sacramental preparation programs, adult faith formation, youth and young adult programs, service-learning, online options and small group settings. - the promotion of commitment to prayer, experiencing different spiritual practices in the Christian tradition, and offering new opportunities to engage with and promote praying the rosary and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament- Personal devotions-

Questions to Consider:

- How might we better support Catholics to grow in a mature faith that enables them to both understand Church teaching and apply this knowledge wisely to their lives and decisions?
- What have you experienced or are you aware of that provides adult faith formation in scripture, moral theology, Church social and ecological teaching, liturgy and mission to the world?
- How might we become a more contemplative people, committing more deeply to prayer as a way of life?
- What opportunities are you aware of for nurturing spiritual development and learning about and participating in prayer practices?
- Which faith formations and spiritual development opportunities do you believe would be of most value for the Archdiocese to establish and promote if existing? What could be the benefits for our Church communities of increasing access to these programs?

Theme Four: Parish life and Liturgy

Overarching Questions:

How do we empower the faithful to live out their Baptism as disciples of Jesus called to the table of the Lord, the altar of sacrifice? How do we become a participatory church where parishes, schools, movements and organizations recognize that every person brings unique graces and gifts, and that all persons contribute to building the Body of Christ?

From the Consultations:

Parish and community life were of great concern to people as these are the primary references of Church for most people. Many people asked, "Why are people no longer attending Mass" and "How can we become a more welcoming and inclusive church?" Some people expressed concern and sadness at the

decreasing number of people involved in parish life in the wake of the pandemic. Several people mentioned the growing cultural diversity of the Archdiocese as both a gift and a challenge. People were concerned about church finances, upkeep of buildings and properties, employment of parish workers, regional communities, and finding new leaders and volunteers. Liturgy was also a significant theme for many people.

Questions for Consideration:

- In your experience what attitudes and behaviours in your parish have contributed to a sense of belonging and building a community that supports people in their life situations?
- What does a welcoming and inclusive community look like? How might our parishes, schools and services provide Christian hospitality?
- What roles in parishes are needed or would help build parish and community life?
- How might we better embrace the diverse liturgical traditions of the Churches which make up the Catholic Church and the cultural gifts of indigenous and immigrant communities to enrich the spirituality and worship of the Church in Australia?
- How might liturgical language, ritual and practice better reflect the lives of our people?
- What kinds of leadership would you like the Archdiocese to provide about the celebration of the Mass and Sacraments? Would guidelines about some of these aspects of liturgy be helpful to parishes? If so, which ones are most important

Theme Five: A Church that hears and responds to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor.

Overarching Question:

How do we become a more outward facing Church connecting with issues of local and global concern?

From the Consultations:

People are concerned about the role of the Church in responding to various crises facing the poor and vulnerable, locally and globally. There were significant responses seeking leadership in the area of climate change and working to end poverty and homelessness. Others asked how the Archdiocese can lead in areas of social and political topics (e.g. abortion, euthanasia, refugees and migrants, and reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples), and defend the rights of the most vulnerable in society. People are looking for opportunities to engage in action and advocacy for social justice.

Many want to see greater collaboration with other Christian denominations and opportunities for ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue.

Questions to consider:

- How might the Church in Australia respond to the call to 'ecological conversion'? How can we express and promote a commitment to an 'integral ecology of life' in all its dimensions, with particular attention to the more vulnerable people and environments in our country and region?
- What kinds of action would you like to see the Archdiocese take in the areas of ecological and social justice, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue?
- How best can the Catholic Church in Adelaide demonstrate leadership in tackling justice, ethics, and moral issues? What kinds of advocacy are most likely to be effective?

Theme Six: Outreach and Accompaniment of Children, Families and Young people

Overarching Question:

How do we become a church that goes out to meet children, families and

young people wherever they are, responds to their needs, and engages in ongoing accompaniment with them in safe and supportive communities?

From the Consultations:

Concerns around caring for and supporting young families – children – outreach and engagement of the young in the faith life and liturgy- support to parents and communities becoming a welcoming arena for people with young children- mental health support of the young people- leadership from young people, opportunities to connect and serve in the community- re-commitment to providing safe environments for young people in our parishes, schools and communities.

Questions to consider

- What does it mean to be a missionary church, an outward facing church, in regard to children, families and young people?
- How might the diocese and parishes better support families with young children? How do we learn what these families would find nurturing and helpful?
- How might the Church engage more meaningfully with young people to enable them to find a 'place to belong'?
- How do we allow the insights, challenges and experiences of young people, children and families to inform and influence our church – parishes, schools, communities and services?
- What particular approaches need to be strengthened and supported to develop youth leadership as an integral part of Church leadership?
- What would it look like to provide inter-generational accompaniment in our communities? How are the young and the elderly looked after together?