



Liturgical Launch of Parish Renewal

SPEECH

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St Mary's Cathedral, Perth
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I pray that it is the aspiration of the whole archdiocese that we walk together to develop a Christ-centred, faithful, vibrant, welcoming, inclusive and mission-orientated Church.

You may remember, these are the very same ideals with which I concluded my welcoming letter to the Archdiocesan Plan 2016 – 2021.

While each person from their Baptism is called to this journey, clearly, priests with their parish pastoral councils have a special part to play. I am very thankful that you are present this evening, it is a wonderful sign of your commitment to Archdiocese and that vision of Church to which we aspire. To assist you in this Gospel privilege and responsibility, this evening we launch a new Constitution for Parish Pastoral Councils, together with extensive support resources to accompany the new constitution. These in turn will be part of a website dedicated to the realisation of our Archdiocesan Plan.

In a particular way these resources will highlight our understanding of what it means to be pastoral and provide practical assistance for the realisation of our pastoral responsibility.

Again I emphasise that this is **our** journey of Faith. Our Baptism into the one Body, the Body of Christ, calls us to collaborate with each other. This collaboration calls us to prayerfully discern what is it that God is asking of us all. Providentially, at this same time the 2020 Plenary Council invites us all to ponder the same question, to contemplate what is in fact the very foundation of all our pastoral initiatives, namely:

Who is this God, whom Jesus makes known, and what is this God calling us to do and to be?

Our Archdiocesan Plan is nothing else but our response to contemplate the face of Christ.

Our plan is and needs to be centred in prayer, *it is for this very reason that this Launch begins with, concludes with prayer and significantly, at the point this evening when we are immersed in the vital question: how is this practical? That is the precise moment that we are most conscious that it is all God's work and we humbly collaborate with Jesus with whom we walk.*

Very importantly, each one of us contributes according to our God given talents. To all the lay faithful, to those in consecrated life, to deacons and priests, Saint Pope John Paul II wrote in his 1978 Christmas message, celebrating the birth of Jesus among us:



“Each person is unique and unrepeatable.” Therefore, each person’s contribution is unique, unrepeatable and essential to fulfilling God’s plan.

It is also true that each person, each parish in fulfilling all that God is asking of us can at times face real challenges.

To aid each parish I pledge the support of our Archdiocese. Our agencies and organisations are **one** of the key and crucial ways that I reach out to you as Chief Shepherd. I wish to sincerely thank them for being present with us this evening, for their service to the Archdiocese and their willingness to assist you.

This evening we have with us the Deacons of the Archdiocese. The establishment of the Diaconate can be described as the early Church’s first new pastoral initiative and born in prayer. I am thankful for their presence tonight for as we embark on this new initiative they are a powerful reminder that the Gospel of the Good Shepherd has a special concern for all those on the margins of life.

At the heart of the new Constitution is a vision that embraces collaboration in our Archdiocese to a new and profound degree. It is a bold and new vision, a first for our Archdiocese.

Bishop Don Sproxton, my Vicar for Parish Renewal and Adult Faith Formation, in a moment will highlight in greater detail this new vision and my support for you all. I sincerely thank him and his committee that have the responsibility for implementing this parish renewal initiative.

I now officially launch our new Constitution for Parish Pastoral Councils and my prayer is always that together we continue to walk faithfully in the footsteps of our Good Shepherd.