



Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

Archbishop of Adelaide

24th March, 2023
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Dear sisters and brothers,

RE: Pastoral Planning in the Archdiocese

Grace and peace, I hope this note finds you well.

In *Evangelii Gaudium* (Joy of the Gospel), Pope Francis expresses this view:

The Parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. While certainly not the only institution which evangelises, if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptability, it continues to be 'the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters'. #E6 28

Here in the Archdiocese of Adelaide, our Parishes and Communities are committed to the vision of a welcoming, Christ-centred community of believers serving others.

In my travels around the Archdiocese, I am always heartened by the capacity of people to find joy and hope in the celebration of the Eucharist. Across diverse backgrounds and experiences, there is a commonality in their support for each other and the building of communion.

At the same time, I recognise that many parishes are grappling with the reality of declining numbers of clergy and lower Mass attendances, accompanied by a decrease in those people identifying as Catholic on the Census. Technological change is also affecting the way we gather and communicate as we strive to be missionary disciples.

The impact on our rural Parishes has intensified in recent times but the challenges also extend to metropolitan parishes and communities. The need for pastoral planning to respond to these challenges has been highlighted through several avenues, including the Diocesan Assemblies and clergy gatherings.

At the beginning of this year, a focus group was established to begin looking at the pastoral reality of our communities. The group is chaired by Sarah Moffatt, Director of Pastoral Life and Mission, and comprises representatives of the Clergy, Laity and Diocesan Teams. The purpose of the group is to gain a greater understanding of the pastoral, geographical, financial and resource requirements of communities in the Archdiocese, identify and address priorities, and develop strategies for the future.

At present the group includes the following members:

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| 1. Vicar General: | Fr Dean Marin |
| 2. Diocesan Pastoral Council: | John Giles |
| 3. Adelaide Cathedral Parish: | Fr Tony Telford-Sharp |
| 4. Parish Finance Liaison: | Danielle Roocke and Ian Cunningham |
| 5. Director, Communications: | Jenny Brinkworth |
| 6. General Manager, Property and Assets: | Kyla Daly |
| 7. Assistant Director, Pastoral Life and Mission: | Peter Bierer |

The focus group is aiming to provide progress recommendations for consideration to the Archbishop through to the Bishop's Council of Priest and the Diocesan Pastoral Council by the middle of the year.

This planning does not take place in isolation from the realities of Parish life and there will be opportunities to engage in forums for both Clergy and Parishes in the coming months.

You are invited, if you have observations around pastoral planning, to make contact with Sarah Moffatt on email smoffatt@adelaide.catholic.org.au

I ask that we pray together for the resilience to face these challenges, bearing in mind that some of our communities are already facing considerable change. I also encourage you to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood.

In Domino,



+Patrick O'Regan
Archbishop of Adelaide