

## **PLENARY WRAP-UP, NOVEMBER, 2011**

*The following information pertains to the proceedings of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Plenary Meeting which took place from 22-25 November at Mary MacKillop Place. If you require any more information, please email [media@catholic.org.au](mailto:media@catholic.org.au)*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Mass of the Holy Spirit was concelebrated on Tuesday 22 November in the Chapel of Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney at 7 am. The President of Conference, Archbishop Philip Wilson, was the principal celebrant and preached the Homily.

The President welcomed the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Guisepppe Lazzarotto who was warmly greeted. He concelebrated the opening Mass, met Bishops informally, addressed the Plenary Meeting and participated in a general discussion. The Bishops had an opportunity to greet Monsignor Luís-Miguel Muñoz Cárdbaba, the recently appointed secretary to the Apostolic Nunciature. Observers from Catholic Religious Australia Sr Anne Derwin and Fr Timothy Norton svd were welcomed.

### **APPOINTMENT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY**

Fr Brian Lucas was reappointed as General Secretary for a further term of five years from August 2012.

### **EPISCOPAL APPOINTMENTS SINCE THE LAST PLENARY**

Bishop Issam Darwish – appointed Bishop of Zahleh e Furzol (Melkite Greek)

Bishop Robert Rabbat – Melkite Eparch ordained 16 September 2011 and took possession 8 October 2011

Archbishop John Bathersby retired 8 November 2011

Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett appointed Apostolic Administrator, Archdiocese of Brisbane 8 November 2011

### **MESSAGE TO THE HOLY FATHER FROM THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE**

*The following message was sent to the Holy Father by the Australian Bishops*

Most Holy Father,

We gather this week at the shrine of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop for our Plenary meeting and we extend our fraternal greetings to you.

Our recent Ad Limina visit in Rome has strengthened our sense of communion with you as the Successor of St Peter and with the universal Church.

We thank you for the warm welcome we received and we are grateful for the attentive collaboration of the Dicasteries of the Roman Curia.

We would also like to express our gratitude for your generosity in coming to bless and open the new Australian pilgrim centre Domus Australia.

During this week together we will mature our proposal for our Year of Grace, a gift we will offer to the Catholic people of Australia as a way of reaffirming bonds of unity and "starting afresh from Christ".

The Year of Grace will officially begin in Pentecost 2012 and will be an opportunity for all people of faith in this country to renew their commitment to prayer, and to unite in a shared hope and communion in our Lord Jesus Christ. We look forward to developing its link to the Year of Faith which you proclaimed while we were in Rome.

As bishops, we pray that our leadership will be ever responsive to the movements of the Lord in this, the Great South Land of the Holy Spirit.

We pledge our collegial support of your ministry and seek your prayers for the Church in Australia and your Apostolic blessing.

Archbishop Philip Wilson,  
President, Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

### **YEAR OF GRACE**

Fr. Peter Brock, Project Officer for the Year of Grace, attended and led a discussion on arrangements for the Year of Grace. More information on the Year of Grace can be sought at [www.yearofgrace.catholic.org.au](http://www.yearofgrace.catholic.org.au)

### **PERSONAL ORDINARIATE FOR FORMER ANGLICANS**

Archbishop Denis Hart, chair of the ad hoc Commission for the Personal Ordinariate, provided a verbal update on the present state of preparation for the introduction of a Personal Ordinariate to be known as the *Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross*.

### **INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS**

The Bishops were addressed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda and a media release was sent out.

### **ISSUES RELATING TO INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY AND CLERGY**

Sr Lydia Allen RSM, from the staff of Good Shepherd Seminary, gave a presentation on issues relating to internet pornography and clergy. The Conference resolved to establish a working party to consider policy and action on this. Archbishop Philip Wilson, Bishop Peter Ingham, Bishop Brian Heenan, Bishop Eugene Hurley and Bishop Peter Comensoli will comprise the working party.

### **FINANCE**

The Financial Situation of the world was addressed by the Bishops with a presentation from Mr Paolo Cipriani and colleagues from the Vatican Bank. The following day, Mr John Ralph AC, a consultant to the Bishops Commission for Administration and Information, addressed the Bishops on the global financial situation, local economic circumstances and the possible impact on the financial affairs of the Conference.

### **COPTIC CHRISTIANS AND PERSECUTION**

The Bishops released a statement in solidarity with Coptic Christians who are currently experiencing violence in Egypt after some discussion on the matter. Extreme violence and persecution have been a daily reality for the Christian minority in Egypt for decades and this has escalated over the past year. The Bishops assured the Egyptian people of their continuing prayers as the election approaches.

## **EUCCHARISTIC CONGRESS**

Material promoting the Eucharistic Congress in Ireland in 2012 was received and distributed to all Bishops. A video presentation by Archbishop Diarmuid Martin from Dublin was shown and can be viewed at this link: <http://vimeo.com/30908807>

## **PUBLIC POLICY OFFICE**

There has been a change in name of the Research Directorate to the Public Policy Office, because of a review of the needs of the General Secretariat. Mr Jeremy Stuparich has been appointed as Public Policy Director, and commenced on 14 November 2011.

## **THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF FUNDING FOR SCHOOLING**

NCEC has submitted (30 September) a response to the four research reports published by the Funding Review Panel on 31 August.

The bulk of the NCEC response dealt with the key research report on the feasibility of establishing a national schools recurrent resource standard.

There has been media speculation about the significant number of “funding maintained” Catholic schools that will “lose funds” from 2014. NCEC has advised the Bishops Commission, however, that the main issue to address in discussions this year with the Funding Review Panel, and next year with the Government, is the issue of funding indexation.

The Chair of NCEC, Mrs Therese Temby, is sustaining a constructive dialogue with the Chair of the Review Panel, Mr David Gonski, to ensure that the NCEC position on funding policy and funding model matters is conveyed to the Review Panel.

The Funding Review Panel will hand its report to the Minister for School Education, the Hon Peter Garrett, in December.

## ***TOGETHER AT ONE ALTAR* – SCHOOLS RESOURCE ON THE EUCHARIST**

This web-based resource for schools was developed by NCEC and produced by Fraynetwork Multimedia ([www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au](http://www.togetheratonealtar.catholic.edu.au)). The resource was launched early last June in the octave of Pentecost to coincide with the beginning of the implementation of the new translation of the Roman Missal in Australian parishes.

## **CATHOLIC SCHOOL FUNDING WEBSITE**

NCEC has established a non-technical school funding website ([www.fundinginfo.catholic.edu.au](http://www.fundinginfo.catholic.edu.au)) aimed at staff and parents in Catholic schools

## **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC COUNCIL FOR LAY PASTORAL MINISTRY**

The Commission acknowledges the need for an increase to the membership of the Australian Catholic Council for Lay Pastoral Ministry. To allow for a good working group the Commission requests that the ACCLPM comprise ten members: one Representative coming from each province and three members selected for their specific expertise and skill set while keeping in mind a gender balance. A Bishop from the Bishops Commission for Church Ministry and a clergy representative from the Australian Catholic Council for Clergy Life and Ministry will also participate in this council.

## **OFFICE FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN (OPW)**

The National Photographic Exhibition of Inspirational Catholic Women is now available to any diocese which didn't have the opportunity to view the exhibition at a convenient time during the first program.

### **COUNCIL FOR AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN (CACW)**

The Bishops Commission for Church Ministry has approved the arrangement of the Council for Australian Catholic Women Annual Address. The speaker and topic for each address will be approved by the Commission. The address will also be made available as a pod cast to ensure it is accessible to women in all parts of Australia.

The Bishops Commission for Church Ministry has approved the organisation of a biennial conference to be organised by the Council for Australian Catholic Women. Representatives throughout all dioceses will be invited to attend.

2,500 copies of the Prayer Book, *Heart Space-A compilation of prayers and reflections by Australian Catholic Women* have been sold. Additional copies are available for purchase through the General Secretariat.

### **MenALIVE**

Robert Falzon from *MenALIVE* (National Catholic Ministry for Men) presented the book "How to Grow a Men's Ministry" to the Bishops Commission for Church Ministry on 29 September. The focus is on Parish Ministry and to date, 7200 men have attended events around Australia. The Commission acknowledges the energetic and positive approach Robert and other members of the coordinating team are having on the lives of men in our parishes.

### **CATHOLIC VOCATIONS MINISTRY AUSTRALIA (CVMA)**

Melita Bagnall rsm has been appointed as the Executive Officer for CVMA for the next 12 months. Katherine Tyrrell rsj completed her one year contract in February 2011. Fr Brian Mascord from the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese was elected as the first Chairperson of CVMA Executive.

### **NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF DIOCESAN ECUMENICAL AND INTERFAITH COMMISSIONS**

This biennial Conference, with the theme of receptive ecumenism, was held in Adelaide in September 2-4. Fr Daniel Madigan SJ and Professor Myriam Wijlens presented papers, as did Fr Gerard Kelly and Fr Denis Edwards. These papers are available on the Conference web-site. The Commission is considering the advisability or otherwise of delaying the next biennial conference in order to mark in a significant way the fiftieth anniversaries of the promulgation of *Unitatis redintegratio* (2014) and *Nostra Aetate* (2015)

### **CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES AUSTRALIA BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

An election was recently conducted amongst Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) members to fill two member representative positions on the Board. Ms Cate Sydes (Marist Youth Care) and Ms Paula La Rosa (Centacare Townsville) were the successful candidates and it was noted at the CSSA Annual General Meeting on 11 October 2011 that Conference would be asked to ratify the outcome. In accordance with the CSSA and CSSA Ltd Constitutions, the Conference ratified the appointments to the Boards of CSSA and CSSA Ltd.

### **APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Mr Paul O'Callaghan's appointment as Executive Director was confirmed on 16 October 2011, following a national selection process conducted by the CSSA Board.

## **COMMUNITY DETENTION**

CSSA has remained involved in discussions with the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) regarding the Expanded Community Detention Program. A number of member agencies have been involved in accommodating unaccompanied minors under this Program either individually or as part of a group.

## **PROJECT COMPASSION**

Archbishop Doyle expressed the appreciation of Caritas for the outstanding support for Project Compassion. Caritas staff were humbled by the generosity of Queenslanders who despite facing their own crisis earlier in the year continued to offer unprecedented levels of support for Project Compassion.

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2011-2012**

The Social Justice Statement – *Building Bridges, Not Walls: Prisons and the justice system* – was launched on Wednesday 14 September at the Australian Catholic University in North Sydney. The Hon. Graham West, CEO of St Vincent de Paul NSW launched the Statement. Mrs Margaret Wiseman of the Sydney Archdiocesan Prison Chaplaincy delivered the response. Special guests at the launch included: The Honourable Greg Smith, NSW Attorney General and Minister for Justice; Sir Gerard Brennan, former Chief Justice of Australia; and Professor Greg Craven, Vice-Chancellor, Australian Catholic University.

To date, approximately 33,000 copies of the Statement have been ordered and distributed to parishes and groups around the nation. A free electronic version of the Statement is also available on the ACSJC and ACBC websites.

## **DEATH PENALTY**

Regarding the plight of members of the so-called Bali Nine, on 10 May, three Indonesian Supreme Court judges reviewed the case against Scott Rush and changed the death penalty to life in prison. On 17 June, it was announced that the Supreme Court had rejected Andrew Chan's final appeal. The decision was made on 10 May but was only posted on the Supreme Court website on Friday 17 June. Since that time, the Supreme Court has also rejected Myuran Sukumaran's appeal. Andrew and Myuran have around one year in which to lodge clemency appeals with President Susilo Yudhoyono., Clemency letters were prepared, signed by Archbishop Wilson and sent to the President of Indonesia and the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia on 8 August.

## **MISSAL IMPLEMENTATION AND PUBLICATION**

The implementation of the new translation is now well advanced in most Dioceses across Australia with the process having commenced on 12 June, 2011. The completion of that process leading to the Order of Mass being fully implemented was expected to be completed by 1 November, 2011. The published copies of the Missal have now arrived in Australia and have been distributed through St Paul's Publications. The entire Missal (Order of Mass with Propers) is mandated for use in Australia from the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, 2011. Many parishes have already taken advantage of the early arrival of the texts and have now moved to using the new translation in its entirety.

A short ceremony was held to formally present copies of the Lectionary to the President and Vice-President of the Conference and a media statement was released. Copy attached

## **MUSIC RESOURCE**

The National Liturgical Music Board has completed the process of identifying the contents for the proposed liturgical music resource. There are a number of other requirements, but

once this work is complete the editorial committee will commence finding a suitable publisher.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

Bishops Commission for Liturgy appoints Dr Paul Taylor of the Archdiocese of Melbourne as Executive Secretary of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy and Director of the National Office for Liturgy for a term of three years

### **REVISED SOCIAL NETWORKING PROTOCOLS**

The Conference approved the revision of the Social Networking Protocols which were originally published in 2009. The revised Protocols include information about Privacy laws and photography laws – particularly with reference to using photos, copyright clearances etc. and reference the latest messages from Pope Benedict XVI.

### **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC MEDIA BLOG**

The Australian Catholic Media Office has launched its new media blog at [www.catholic.org.au/mediablog](http://www.catholic.org.au/mediablog) which aims to create a sense of connection between the lay people and the Bishops Conference and demonstrate official Church positions on issues. The blog is hoped to enhance the profile of the ACBC and of the Church in Australia and engage further in Social Media.

### **CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE**

Catechetical material for Prisoners, *Hearing God's Call: An Audio Introduction to the Catholic Faith* has been completed and produced, with one copy of this CD set sent to each Prison Chaplain across Australia for use in their ministry. 200 additional copies are available to be distributed based on need/prison population etc. Each diocesan Bishop has also been sent a complimentary copy.

### **NATIONAL OFFICE FOR EVANGELISATION**

The National Office for Evangelisation has begun a monthly electronic newsletter to parishes, schools and groups and movements. Called *Evangelise Australia*, this newsletter seeks to inspire recipients to find out more about the new evangelisation, to share resources and ideas on how people can get involved in mission and begin preparing people for the 2012 Conference on the New Evangelisation. The National Office for Evangelisation now has a new website which offers an updated Directory on groups and movements involved in evangelisation. There are also a significant number of Events being listed to encourage people to get involved in nurturing their faith.

### **YOUTH ISSUES**

With WYD to be held again in just two years, in 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, work has commenced already on national preparations. The Commission has agreed to continue the National WYD Project to support the national WYD pilgrimage and to continue the National WYD Committee, and has agreed that the highly successful Australian National Gathering in Madrid be held once again in Rio.

### **AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH GATHERING**

Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Conventions are intended to be held biennially, following the Youth Leaders Gathering in 2008 and the Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Convention in 2010. The next Youth Ministry Convention is scheduled for 2012 in Campbelltown. Further, a national youth gathering in December 2013 allows the Catholic Church in

Australia to address the needs of, and listen to the voice of, not only those small numbers that can attend the overseas WYD that year, but also the much larger numbers of faithful young people who cannot. Whilst the national youth gatherings are not planned to be mini-WYDs - there will be some common features - they can be planned and articulated by dioceses, schools and groups and movements in a coherent and sensible manner with their much smaller WYD pilgrimages.

### **7TH WORLD MEETING OF FAMILIES, MILAN**

The next World Meeting of Families is to be held in Milan from 30 May to 3 June 2012. As has been the practice in the past, the Commission will sponsor a family to attend the meeting as official representatives of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. A budget has been approved by the Conference for 2012 for the purpose.

### **DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PILGRIMAGE TO THE 5<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL EUCHARIST CONGRESS, IN DUBLIN, JUNE 2012.**

The Secretary General of the 50th International Eucharistic Congress has announced that, following discussions with the International Catholic Deaf Foundation, there will be a full deaf track at next year's Congress, including six workshops facilitated by the Foundation and signed for the deaf. Mr Stephen Lawlor and Ms Nicole Clark from The Ephpheta Centre (Sydney) will be presenting two of the workshops in Dublin.

Attendance to the Congress will provide catechesis, faith formation and education to the Deaf and those working in pastoral care of the Deaf. Attendees would also be invited to attend the National Deaf Pastoral Care Conference in September 2012 which will be facilitated by The Ephpheta Centre (Sydney) in collaboration with the DHHC.

Bishops will each be approached to consider sponsoring one deaf or hard-of-hearing person from their Diocese to attend the Congress.

### **CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF MARRIAGE FORMATION**

The long history of the Catholic Church in Australia in the provision of marriage formation was boosted by the formation of CSME following the 1973 Eucharistic Congress in Melbourne. Further advances were made in late 1980s and early 1990s with collaboration with secular organizations, increased Commonwealth government funding, and new developments including the introduction of the FOCCUS pre-marriage instrument. The Conference approved a project, and funding, to convene a symposium in Sydney in February/March 2012 that will bring together 20 - 35 leaders to discuss the future of Catholic marriage formation in Australia.