

Bishop's Leadership Forum

24 to 25 January 2013

Session 5

The following process was used in seeking the following information:

1. 5 minutes of personal reflection
2. Individuals to choose their top two priorities and write them down
3. These priorities were placed on the wall under one of the following headings (Coming from the 3 priority areas named by Bishop Bill in Session 1):
 - Parishes as the Centres of the Mission and Life of the Diocese
 - Clergy in Parish Leadership
 - Linkages
4. These priorities were then clustered or merged if needed
5. Participants took part in multi voting
6. There emerged during this process some higher order statements which can be covered under the headings of 'Other' and 'Vision'

Parishes as Centres of the Mission and Life of the Diocese

Key Area 1 - Focus on Parishes as Eucharistic Communities (welcoming and inclusive), (incl transitional school students) – (parish as nexus)

Led by Chris Quinn

Priorities and Actions

- Making our Parishes more welcoming
- Church as Community
 - Localised responses to community needs
 - Opening space for young mums groups, playgroups, teenage spaces, homework centres, mentoring opportunities for older people to young people
- Sense of community lacking in Parishes – Get out and do!
- Sustainability
 - Parish Linkages –leadership structure
 - Parish School responsibilities e.g. Sacraments
 - Sacramental partnerships e.g. fewer Masses spread around region



- Clergy teams living in community
- Development of positive parish environments that embrace all, particularly young people and young families
- Inclusivity – “attract” others e.g. indigenous communities
- Young people involvement in Parish – starting with schools
- Consistent with Bishop's views, communicate that we are a welcoming church, a church for all.
 - Review practices and perceptions that are not consistent with previous practices and perceptions especially with other priorities listed
- Developing the “Parish” as the nexus of church life. (Links to CSO, CCSS at local level supported from Diocese)

Key Area 2– Re-engage and evangelise with communities

The group decided the following Key Area was not supported enough to lead into further discussion.

Priorities and Actions

- Mission of the church to the 90% disengaged Catholics. (Why disengaged?, How engaged? Are all equal and welcome?)
- Finding a way to re-engage (with) non-practising Catholics, particularly teachers in Catholic Schools
- Establishing ways of transitioning students/families from their “temporary” Eucharistic communities in the schools into a “on-going” Eucharistic community (parish/diocese) particularly focusing on school leavers
- Re-evangelising – How do we re-engage those who are so disillusioned with the Church that they have given up? How do we invite anew to make it sincere, honest and worth taking up?
- Vigorous outreach to people not of the faith, or who have left the faith, via revitalised RCIA and to year 11/12 students in our schools an adapted RCIA

Key Area 3 – Revisit sacramental programs

Led by John Donnelly

Priorities and Actions

- Parishes need to review Sacramental Policy
- Use our catholic school and teachers to help bring parish and school together
- Revisit/modify/restructure role of schools/parents/parishes/priests in children's sacramental programs



Key Area 4 – Faith development in schools

Led by Michael O'Brien

Priorities and Actions

- Via financial sustainability pay trained teachers of Catholic religion and morals into state schools where 50% of catholic students attend
- Faith Development in schools – staff, students and families

Clergy in Parish Leadership

Key Area 5 – Develop innovative models of ministry and parish leadership (incl teams, support etc)

Led by Ray Collins

Priorities and Actions

- Develop new models of parish leadership implemented
- Support parish priests with parish lay involvement and/or paid manager
- Diocese provide a change facilitator to work with interested priests and their community to discern and enact alternative ways of ministry and life as church
- Succession planning for parish priests – ensuring the future of the church
- Can we change direction without changing anything? –Yes, by recognising different perspectives of the three generations that make up any parish
- Via financial sustainability - team lay parish leadership to free priests, (pay to train if needed) for pastoral work and liturgies (Mass) to sustain our existing community bases

Key Area 6 – Training & Formation for lay leadership (incl use of technology)

Led by Irene Gover

Priorities and Actions

- Availability of training and formation for lay leadership and follow up consultation availability
- Promote programs of like ministering to like, e.g. youth to youth or young mothers to young mothers
- What might/could a local parish look like to be a church on a mission
 - Use of technology
 - Delete Parish Pastoral Councils
 - Less meeting times free up time so priests are able to look after his flock
 - Another way to be church using technology productively which is useful



Key Area 7– Discern and dialogue with the reality of our lived experience

The group decided the following Key Area was not supported enough to lead into further discussion.

Priorities and Actions

- Aligning the lived reality of the people with the espoused position of the Church – let's be honest and move away from "don't ask, don't tell"
- Listening to the wisdom of people's experience – How to grow and live our sexuality healthily
- Review our life, mission and practices in light of what we've learnt from abuse issues – transformation individual and Catholic culture
- Speak to (Dialogue with) our "culture" in its understanding of the human person, (we may need to re-think because the spirit may be there teaching something new).

Linkages

Key Area 8 – Develop a culture of collaboration between parishes, Chancery schools, Catholic Development Fund and CatholicCare Social Services et al (critical for sustainability)

Led by Sean Scanlon

Priorities and Actions

- Sustainability linkages between parishes, Catholic Schools Office and CatholicCare Social Services is the key
- Improve the relationship between CatholicCare Social Services and the Diocese with an aim towards a closer connection with parishes and catholic schools
- Good links and communications between parishes, Catholic Schools Office, CatholicCare Social Services and Catholic Development Fund
- Church is not sustainable.
 - Reason: ageing population, loss of sense of belonging, decrease of people, and decrease of money.
 - Possible solutions: establish better and stronger links between school, parish community e.g. Weekly class Masses, fundraising, working bees adopt a grandparent
- From talk-fest to considered action
- Collaboration for sustainability
 - Share resources, knowledge, people skills
 - CatholicCare Social Services working with parishes to train willing members of the parish to be involved in community development
 - Diversified use of school and parish sites to attract funding for Diocese

- Greater communication in clergy regarding CatholicCare Social Services programs/events and vice versa
- Authentic structures and processes for collaboration communication and resourcing among agencies and parishes to enable transparency in carrying out the Mission of the Church
- Leadership to actively promote and action:
 - Co-location
 - Use of services and facilities across parishes, schools, CatholicCare Social Services, Catholic Development Fund and other agencies, e.g. Calvary, St Vincent's De Paul etc)
 - Inspire a new culture of collaboration between church and agency to encourage sustainability and growth
- Work together, learn about and share, each other's resources. Promote this collaboration to our parishioners, clients and stakeholders
- Parish support unit to assist with administration but also support pastoral ministries

Key Area 9 – Significantly improve both internal and external communications (i.e. linkages and good news)

Led by Emma Blackford

Priorities and Actions

- Communications a) access to technology for outer areas of the Diocese, b) Marketing plan to identify needs and resources
- Utilise multi-media to communicate “good news” stories of Catholic agencies, parishes, church initiatives
- A consistent communication strategy between church and agencies
- Future proactive communication strategies
 - Messages to parishes
 - Website, media, social media
 - Personnel required for monitoring and quality control
- We need a Marketing/PR person to tell the Diocese and wider community that there are many good Catholics doing many good things, especially in the light of negative publicity of late
- One common communication thread across all parts of the Diocese
- Tell them – tell the communities and each other what we are doing for them (positive communication)
- Openly communicating with internal and external groups, the DoMN's involvement in Royal Commission, and regular messages from Bishop Bill, using the website, advertising, notices, and not just *Aurora*, TV etc. Send a representative to Royal Commission to report back.
- Communication – the good news and information



- Readily available means of communication and response
- Immediate priority especially during Royal Commission:
 - Diocesan focus on promoting proactive good news stories
 - Pre-empt news and encourage staff to share success stories for wider publicity and media

Key Area 10 - A long term vision for the Diocese (20 years?)

Led by Kathryn Fox

Priorities and Actions

Long term vision for the Diocese (20 yrs?)

- A vision of and for the Catholic Church in our Diocese that is authentic and reflective of contemporary thinking and beliefs
- Unified working structures in the Diocese
 - Regions aren't working
 - Parish Councils don't work in all parishes
- Evolve supporting structure, procedures and guidelines in the implementation of the pastoral plan
- That the church to recognised as visible and credible sign in the community with God's people
- 20 year visioning
 - Working towards a realistic model of parishes in 20 years time
 - Welcoming invitational
 - School and parish linked, connected
 - Laity leadership – how will that happen?
- Development of an agreed structure, advisory and decision making processes in the Diocese
- Commitment from the part of the Diocese and parishes, leadership, agencies to implement the Diocesan Pastoral Plan in letter of the spirit

Key Area 11 – Review Pastoral Plan (Incl schools, CatholicCare Social Services, Diocesan decision processes and structures)

Led by Katherine Fox

Priorities and Actions

- Review Pastoral Plan (incl schools, CCSS, Diocesan Decision processes and structures)
- Review of structures of Diocesan Pastoral Plan. Principles are fine structure needs reviewing
- Connecting CatholicCare Social Service and Catholic Schools Office into the Diocesan Pastoral Plan
- Our Synod (92-93) we need to rewrite pastoral planning principles and include parish, Catholic Schools and CatholicCare Social Services



Key Area 12– Achieve “flagship” Catholic presence in community outreach

Led by Jen Smith

Priorities and Actions

- Clear Branding “Flagship” Catholic presence in community welfare – Refugee and Homeless

Key Area 13– Fund Catholic teachers in State Schools

The group decided the following Key Area was not supported enough to lead into further discussion.

Key Area 14– Identifying and implementing the lessons learnt from abuse issues

Led by Louise Gannon

Priorities and Actions

- Sexual Abuse – need to vocalise issues of sexual/other forms of abuse, reform, changing of culture using lay/support people
- Can we turn the “abuse issue” into a positive force for growth? Yes, the commission will stimulate “Family Fortress” sentiments, we can show how to reinforce family