
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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SYNODAL DIRECTORY

DIOCESAN SYNOD 2019 – 2021

DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

PROLOGUE

The Second Vatican Council says three principal elements express the true and genuine image of the Church.

1. The Church is presented as the People of God and its hierarchical authority as service.
2. The Church is a communion and there is a mutual relationship between the particular and the universal Church, and between collegiality and primacy.
3. All members of the People of God share, in a manner proper to each of them, in the threefold priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ.

(Apostolic Constitution *Sacrae Disciplinae Leges*)

Canons 460 to 468 of the Code of Canon Law and the Instruction on Diocesan Synods issued in 1997 by the Congregation for Bishops and the Congregation for the Evangelisation of People (the Instruction hereafter) develop the manner in which a Diocesan Synod is to be put into effect for the benefit of “those whose duty it is to execute the law, and they bind them in executing the law.” (Can. 34 '1)

This Synodal Directory for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle sets out the requirements under the headings:

- I. Nature and Purpose of the Synod
- II. Convocation and Preparation for the Synod
- III. Synod Membership
- IV. Officers of the Synod
- V. Commissions
- VI. Conducting the Synod
- VII. Synodal Declarations and Decrees

I. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE SYNOD

Synods seek to inspire missionary renewal and unity within the diocesan community. In this way they contribute to the shaping of the pastoral activities of the particular Church and lend continuity to its own liturgical, spiritual, and canonical traditions.

The Instruction sets out the nature and purpose of the diocesan Synod that may be summarised as follows:

- Canon 460 of the Code of Canon Law describes the diocesan Synod as an "assembly of selected priests and other members of Christ's faithful of a particular Church who, for the good of the whole diocesan community, assist the diocesan Bishop".
- The Synod offers the Bishop the opportunity of calling to co-operate with him, priests, religious and laity such as will demonstrate the responsibility of all in building up the Body of Christ.
- Synods are instruments of governance and communion, in which the Bishop is the visible source and foundation of unity.
- In the process of the Synod, the Bishop exercises the office of governing the Church entrusted to his care.
- The Bishop determines its convocation and, following consultation, proposes the questions to be discussed in the Synod and presides at the synodal sessions. Moreover, it is the Bishop who, as sole legislator, signs the synodal declarations and decrees and orders their publication.
- Diocesan Synods are important instruments of collaboration and discernment effecting conciliar renewal.
- The work of the Synod is to:
 - assist the Bishop in his office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing the Christian community
 - consult and collaborate with the diocesan community to build up the Body of Christ
 - discern the will of the Spirit with the diocesan community, the pastoral activities and direction, for the good of the diocese
 - foster a sense of communion and missionary renewal.
- The Synod builds up and fosters unity within the diocese and with the Holy See and the Universal Church. Hence it is necessary that the synodal documents accurately reflect the universal Magisterium of the Church and apply common canonical discipline to the particular circumstances of the diocese.
- Always bearing in mind the need for renewal and, where necessary, remedying gaps in diocesan norms, the Synod will also evaluate the adequacy of pastoral programs already in place, and with the help of divine grace, propose new pastoral plans where such are deemed desirable.¹

¹ The Instruction on Diocesan Synods by the Congregation for Bishops and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples (1997) provides instruction to all bishops of the Latin Rite regarding Diocesan Synods. This Diocesan Synod Directory follows the processes outlined in the 'Instruction'.

II. CONVOCAATION AND PREPARATION OF THE SYNOD

“It is the sole prerogative of the diocesan Bishop, in his prudent judgment and having consulted with the Council of Priests, to convoke a diocesan Synod.” (Can. 461) On 8 August 2019, Bishop Wright decreed:

Having consulted with the Presbyteral Council (CIC c. 461 § 1) and consulted the Diocesan Council for Mission (CIC c. 511), and in anticipation of the Plenary Council of Australia 2020, and in responding to the question of the plenary council – listen to what the spirit is saying, and the need to renew the Diocesan Synod of 1992-1993, I hereby convoke the Synod of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (CIC cc. 460ff). The Diocesan Synod will be conducted according to the diocesan synodal directory.²

The actual meaning of the word "Synod" is "journeying together". It is a long-established practice in the Church to use this term for decisive meetings at significant times where members of the Church come together to review one or more issues and make decisions. It is a process by which the people of God walk together, a journey, trying to respond more fully to God. More than 50 years after the Second Vatican Council and in view both of the multiple challenges facing us as well as the opportunities that contemporary cultural changes afford us, we are at a significant moment in the history of our Diocese. There is clear duty on us to discern carefully together what the Spirit is saying to the Church in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and agree on common goals and actions for the coming years.

In convoking the Synod, I am mindful of Pope Francis's desire that we advance along the path of what he calls “a pastoral and missionary conversion which cannot leave things as they presently are”³. We owe this to future generations and to the wider society that we want to serve. Pope Francis explains what he means by pastoral and missionary conversion when he writes: “Pastoral ministry in a missionary key seeks to abandon the complacent attitude that says, ‘We have always done it this way’.”⁴ It means being bold and creative in the task of rethinking the goals, structures, style and methods of evangelisation in our diocesan community with its various parish and ecclesial, religious and social communities.

Our Diocesan Synod is being held in the context of the Australian Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Australia. Originally, the Plenary Council was to gather in October 2020 but due to the impact of COVID-19 it has been moved to October 2021. The entire People of God in Australia began preparing for this historic moment by listening to God and by listening to one another's stories of faith in response to the question – “What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?”

So, as the Ceremonial of Bishops remarked, what we do is not simply about administration, it is about being the sacrament that the Church is called to be. The sacrament that the individual baptised Christian is. The sacrament, the sign of God's power at work that any parish, any community is called to be; that we as a Diocese are called to be.

As we move towards our Synod, let the peace of Christ reign in our hearts as we try to let the message of Christ in all its richness find its place in us. Then we might share with

² Decree of the Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle 19/2019 – 8 August 2019

³ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, 33, 2015

⁴ *Ibid* 33

each other what all of that is about, and how we can better be that message of Christ incarnated in a people, in this place and time.

I would ask you all to keep constantly in your prayers the Synod, invoking the presence of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us all. And asking Mary MacKillop (the unofficial patron), first saint of our country, for her prayers for us, as we journey together to try and serve the Lord, and shine the light in our place, as she did in her place and time.⁵

The Diocesan Synod 2019-2021, to be held in three sessions, invites the People of God to carefully discern together what the Spirit is saying to the Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to agree on common goals and actions for the coming years.

Session One – Celebration – 23 November 2019

Session Two – Discernment – 22 May 2021

Session Three – Implementation – 20 November 2021

III. MEMBERSHIP OF THE SYNOD

The diocesan Bishop presides over the Diocesan Synod. The Code of Canon Law (Can. 463) sets out those persons who are members of the Synod. They are for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle:

- the Vicar General
- the members of the Council of Priests
- the members of the Council for Mission (Diocesan Pastoral Council)
- the Deans.

The law provides also that other members are to be elected in such a way that the membership, like the membership of the diocesan pastoral council, “truly reflects the entire portion of the people of God that constitutes the diocese, taking account of the different regions of the diocese, of social conditions and professions, and of the part played in the apostolate by the members, whether individually or in association with others”. (Can. 512.2)

Details of how these members will be selected and appointed are found in **Appendix A**.

The diocesan Bishop may also invite others to be members of the diocesan Synod, whether clerics or members of institutes of consecrated life or lay members of the faithful.

Lay members must be possessed of “firm faith, high moral standards and prudence” and enjoy canonically regular status.⁶ The diocesan Bishop shall communicate in writing to members, their designation as members and likewise, members, not bound ex officio and de jure, shall communicate their acceptance in writing.

Members of Synod once lawfully designated, have a right and duty to participate in the sessions of Synod. If they are unable to attend, a proxy cannot be sent in his or her place.

⁵ Bishop William Wright, Homily at the morning Mass of 8 August 2019, on the Solemnity of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop convoking the Diocesan Synod for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

⁶ Can. 512.3; Instr. on Diocesan Synods II, 3.1

One may lose one's membership by reason of loss of title – that which qualified one to become a member – or by removal by the Bishop for a lawful reason.

As provided in Can. 833, before commencing the Synodal discussions, the Synod Members, as ecclesial officers, shall make the Profession of Faith and an Oath of Fidelity.

The diocesan Bishop may invite to the diocesan Synod as observers some ministers or members of Churches or ecclesial communities that are not in full communion with the Catholic Church, but who can play an important role in the renewal of the Catholic Church.

IV. OFFICERS OF THE SYNOD

President:

Bishop Wright will preside over the diocesan Synod. He may however, delegate the Vicar General to fulfil this office at individual sessions of the Synod. (Can. 462.2)

Moderator:

The diocesan Bishop appoints a Moderator to oversee the preparatory stages of the Synod and to co-ordinate the offices and commissions of the Synod and to moderate the sessions of the Synod. (Instr. III. B. 2.3)

Bishop Wright in consultation with the Council for Mission has appointed Diocesan Director of Pastoral Ministries, Mrs Teresa Brierley, as Moderator.

Secretary:

The diocesan Bishop shall appoint a Secretary to oversee the Secretariat and Communications Commission of the Synod. (Instr. 3. B. 1) The secretary shall oversee the Secretariat and Communications Commission, set out below.

The Pastoral Ministries Office as synodal secretariat will assist in the work of the Diocesan Synod Working Party.

V. COMMISSIONS

Preparatory

Bishop Wright in consultation with the Council for Mission has constituted the Synod Working Party as the Preparatory Commission.

The members of this preparatory commission are chosen by the Bishop from amongst the clergy and other faithful who are distinguished by their pastoral prudence and by their professional competence and who, in so far as possible, reflect the various charisms and ministries of the People of God. Some members should be expert in the disciplines of Canon Law and Sacred Liturgy. (Instr. III, B, 1)

Its tasks are principally to:

- assist the Bishop in matters pertaining to the organisation and preparation of the Synod
- draw up and publish the synodal Directory
- designate the synodal members and determine the questions to be proposed for synodal deliberation.

The members of the Synod Working Party are:

- Teresa Brierley
- Helen Belcher
- Lawrie Hallinan
- Gary Christensen
- Sr Patricia Egan
- Uta France
- Bernadette Gibson
- Fr Geoff Mulhearn
- Helene O'Neill
- Michael O'Connor
- Ben van der Wijngaart.

They are supported by:

- Alyson Segrott (Pastoral Ministries)
- Jenny Harris (Pastoral Ministries)
- Brooke Cross (Communications)
- Ashleigh Banks/Sarah James (Communications).

The diocesan Bishop presides over the meetings of the preparatory commission. If he is unable to preside, his delegate does so.⁷

Consultative

To assist the diocesan Bishop, whose prerogative it is to propose topics for the consideration of the Synod members, the faithful shall be afforded the opportunity of expressing their needs, desires and opinions with regard to the topics to be dealt with in the Synod. Moreover, the clergy of the diocese shall be asked separately to formulate proposals by way of response to the pastoral challenges with which they are confronted. This latter shall be done at meetings of

⁷ The Director of Pastoral Ministries has been delegated to oversee the Diocesan Synod processes

the clergy in Deaneries, convened for that purpose, and at diocesan gatherings of the clergy. (Instr. I, 1 & III, C, 2)

The Diocesan Synod 2019-2021 journey commenced in November 2018 and continues years of synodal journeying since the 1992-93 Diocesan Synod.

The people of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle have met in regular Diocesan Assemblies and gatherings:

- 1995 – Sacraments of Initiation
- 1996 – Permanent Diaconate and Preparing Parishes for Change
- 1998-99 – Interparish Strategic Planning
- 2000 – New Wine into Fresh Wineskins
- 2004-05 – *Towards the Dawn*
- 2007 – It's Time to Celebrate
- 2010 – Diocesan gathering – Moving Forward Together
- 2015, 2016, 2017 – Regional Gatherings with the Diocesan Pastoral Council.

The purpose of these assemblies and gatherings has been to “hear God’s people and empower them to participate fully in Christ’s mission” in line with the Pastoral Plan established at the 1992-93 Diocesan Synod.

Diocesan Synod 2019-2021 with the theme, “Building the Kingdom of God together in the Church of Maitland-Newcastle”, is being held in the context of the Australian Plenary Council 2020 at which the Catholic Church in Australia will gather.

The diocesan community has been preparing for the Plenary Council 2020 and the diocesan Synod by listening to God and listening to one another’s stories of faith in response to the question – *What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?*

In accordance with six Plenary Council thematic papers resulting from this listening process, the question posed by Bishop Wright to the first session of Synod in November 2019 was:

As disciples of Christ, what needs to happen in our hearts and in our minds and in our community for us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:

- *missionary and evangelising*
- *inclusive, participatory and synodal*
- *humble, healing, and merciful*
- *prayerful and eucharistic*
- *a joyful, hope-filled and servant community*
- *open to conversion, renewal, and reform?*

Session One of the Diocesan Synod was an open invitation for anyone from the diocesan community to participate in workshops on these six themes.

During the months since the first session of the Synod, limited by COVID-19 restrictions, the Synod Working Party has coordinated:

- the analysis of responses from the first session of the Synod as well as those contained in the diocesan report on the Listening Stage of the Plenary Council
- the preparation of papers for further consultation based on the five foundational aspects of diocesan life
 - Identity and Community

- Worship and Prayer
- Formation and Education
- Mission and Outreach
- Leadership and Structure
- a program of consultative meetings to be held before the second session of the Synod.

The following organising cycle or planning model is helpful for our synodal process:



The *Instruction* notes that consultation endeavours to reach all “vital forces” of the People of God present and operating in the Diocese. For this reason, consultation has taken place and will take place in local communities, institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, ecclesial associations, educational institutions and other diocesan agencies and in significant Catholic movements and groups including health and aged-care communities; St Vincent de Paul, other diverse and migrant communities; youth ministry groups and ecclesial groupings such as, Charismatic Renewal, Cursillo and others; the prison community; ethnic groups, and other language-speaking communities.

Spiritual, catechetical, and formational preparation

The functions of the Adult Faith Formation Council and the Formation and Education Office of the Diocese are to provide for the formation of Members of the Synod and the faithful for the more effective and fruitful celebration of the Synod. “The celebration of the Synod affords the Bishop a privileged opportunity for the formation of the faithful. It leads to a well-articulated catechesis of the faithful with regard to the mystery of the Church and the participation of all the faithful in her mission. Such catechesis is carried on in the light of the teaching of the Church’s Magisterium and particularly that of the Second Vatican Council. To this end, concrete directives can be given to priests for preaching.” (Instr. III, C, 1)

A program of dialogue, contemplation and formation will be created for Lent 2021 consisting of material developed by the Synod Working Party and its associated Focus Groups. Reflection Days and Evenings with Bishop Bill will follow during the Easter Season before the second session of Synod. It is envisaged these opportunities will provide the Synod delegates time to listen to the voice of the people of the Diocese, to listen to the Spirit and to bring to the Synod what they are discerning.

The *Instruction* for Diocesan Synod states: “In providing suitable directives for consultation, unjustified expectations with regard to the acceptance of proposals should be avoided.” (Instr. III, C. 2.) For this reason the *Instruction* provides that: “In view of the bonds uniting the particular Church and her Pastor with the universal Church and the Roman Pontiff, the Bishop has the duty to exclude from the synodal discussions theses or positions – **as well as proposals submitted to the Synod with the mere intention of transmitting to the Holy See ‘polls’ in their regard** – discordant with the perennial doctrine of the Church or the Magisterium or concerning material reserved to Supreme ecclesiastical authority or to other ecclesiastical authorities.” (Instr. IV, 4; CD 8; Can. 381)

Determining the questions

At the conclusion of the consultative process, with the assistance of persons expert in the various disciplines and pastoral spheres, and with the assistance of the preparatory commission, the Bishop shall proceed to determine those questions on which the synodal debate will concentrate.

Finally, the approved texts of these questions should be transmitted to the members of the Synod and sufficient time allotted for them to be studied before the initiation of the synodal sessions. (Instr. III, C, 3)

Secretariat and Communications

The Synodal secretariat (Diocesan Pastoral Ministries Unit) shall be directed by a member of the Preparatory Commission (The Diocesan Synod Working Party), the Moderator (Director Pastoral Ministries). “The function of such a secretariat is to assist the Synod as far as organisational matters are concerned: transmission and archiving of documentation, drawing up minutes, direction of logistical matters, as well as matters relating to finances and accounting.” (Instr. III, B, 1) Information concerning the Synod is disseminated to the media by means of press releases, website material, supplements, and social media.

“All should be informed with regard to the nature and purpose of the Synod and the scope of its deliberations.” (Instr. III, C, 1) In August 2020, a document, *2020 Plenary Council – Let’s Listen and Discern* was produced and widely circulated in order to invite listening and discernment conversations from across the whole Diocese. The question asked was:

As disciples of Christ, what needs to happen in our hearts and in our minds and in our community for us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:

- *missionary and evangelising*
- *inclusive, participatory and synodal*
- *humble, healing, and merciful*
- *prayerful and eucharistic*
- *a joyful, hope-filled and servant community*
- *open to conversion, renewal, and reform?*

Legal

The Diocesan Chancellor shall have the function of ensuring conformity in all things pertaining to the Synod, with the General Law of the Church, avoiding matters that are *ultra vires*, and shall, with others, expert in ecclesiastical disciplines, assist the Bishop in drafting the Decrees and Declarations of the Synod.

If there is to be a research component to the Synod or a survey to be conducted, then ethical guidelines will be established and followed so that those participating will be able to make an informed decision concerning participation. Confidentiality will be honoured with recorded information kept secure and in a confidential place.

Liturgical and Spiritual Journey

The Liturgy Council through its Synod Liturgy Focus Group and diocesan Liturgy Office shall oversee the preparation of the Liturgies associated with the Synod and promote prayer for the success of the Synod.

Liturgies associated with the Synod include:

- Mass convoking the Synod celebrated on the Feast of Mary MacKillop, Thursday 8 August 2019
- the Opening Liturgy celebrated at the beginning of the first session of the Synod on Saturday 23 November 2019
- the closing Mass for the first session of the Synod celebrated as the Vigil of the Feast of Pentecost 2019
- the Opening Prayer for each of the subsequent sessions of the Synod that will echo the Opening Liturgy
- the Closing Liturgy for each of the subsequent sessions of the Synod that will take the form of Evening Prayer I
- Mass celebrating the conclusion of the Synod as determined appropriate at the time.

Prayer promoting the success of the Synod shall include:

- a brief Synod Prayer added as an addendum to the Plenary Council Prayer following the Amen and before the concluding litany
- a selection of petitions for inclusion in the Universal Prayer at Sunday Mass and other occasions as appropriate leading up to the Synod
- a resource encouraging weekly prayer with the Sunday Gospel for the period determined by the Synod Working Party.

VI. CONDUCTING THE SYNOD

On Thursday 8 August 2019 on the feast day of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, the Synod was officially convoked and launched at a Mass at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. The Mass, which was celebrated by Bishop Bill Wright, was attended by representatives from across the Diocese and the Decree of Convocation was formally read.

Details of Procedures to be followed during the Synod sessions are to be found in **Appendix B**.

VII. SYNODAL DECLARATIONS AND DECREES

At the Synod in November 2021, there will be voting on a variety of Proposals for Action. These Proposals, if adopted, then become recommendations to the Bishop for his consideration as possible actions appropriate to the needs of the Diocese. The Bishop then has responsibility to draw up decrees and statutes based on these recommendations. He does this, cognisant of the needs, wishes and desires of the People of God but also cognisant of the general law of the Church.

Each of the six themes, from the Plenary Council process, were introduced at the first session of the Synod, drawing on the experience of the people of the Diocese (as identified through the listening process) and the Tradition of the Church (as addressed through the Catechetical program).

Proposals for Action emerging from the Five Foundations Planning Framework for the Diocese, (which are recommendations to the Bishop as sole legislator) will be brought forward and these will be voted on.

The Five Foundations of the Diocese are:

1. Identity and Community
2. Worship and Prayer
3. Formation and Education
4. Mission and Outreach
5. Leadership and Structure.

The diocesan Bishop alone signs the synodal declarations and decrees, by which means he promotes and fosters the pastoral norms for diocesan life.

APPENDIX A

DIOCESAN MEMBERS OF SYNOD

Purpose

The purpose of the Synod is to:

- assist the Bishop in his office of teaching, sanctifying, and governing the diocesan community
- consult and collaborate with the diocesan community to discern the will of the Holy Spirit regarding pastoral activities and direction for the good of the whole Diocese
- foster a sense of community and renewal within the Diocese.

Synod Membership

Nominations for delegates will be called from members of the Diocese so that those who participate in the Synod are a true reflection of the entire portion of the people of God who constitute the Diocese, taking account of the different regions of the Diocese, of social conditions and professions, and of the part played in the apostolate by the members.

Delegates will then be appointed by the Bishop into one of the following categories as **Members of Synod**:

Synod Members – They will be required to sign the Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity. They will be able **to speak** from the floor of Synod and **will have voting rights**.

Observers – According to Canon 463 §3, the Bishop can invite ministers or members of other Christian Churches or ecclesial communities not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who have a close connection to the Diocese, to be Synod observers. They may wish to contribute to the discussions of Synod but have **no voting rights**.

Synod Participant – Some of those who have been invited to be delegates may not be able to sign the Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity. They have been invited because of their commitment to the vision of the Diocese/parishes and their assistance in delivering the mission of the Church. Their knowledge and experience may contribute to the Synod discussions and so they have a voice but **no voting rights**.

Interested People – There may be people who wish to be invited because of their interest in the Catholic Church and the work of the Synod and/or who are unable to be Synod members because of the substantial commitment required. They may be present at sessions of Synod with **neither voice nor voting rights**.

Characteristics of Synod Members

As the Synod is a gathering of the Church, Synod Members are to be baptised Catholics or be people who have begun the RCIA process towards baptism. The Diocese and its ministries have other meetings and processes where they consult and engage with people who are not Catholic. The Synod has an agenda and process that makes it different from these broad consultation processes.

All Synod Members must see themselves, and be recognised by others, as having:

- active involvement in a parish, agency, or ministry group within the Diocese
- a commitment to contributing to the Diocese becoming more Christ-like
- a relationship with God and a commitment to discern prayerfully with others what God wants for the whole Diocese
- a striving to live the Gospel in their family, work, and community activities – being loving, forgiving, hospitable, compassionate, supportive of the poor and inclusive of all
- a desire and ability to listen with an open mind and heart and to weigh up all they hear, especially within the parish or community they represent
- an ability to fulfill the requirements of Synod Membership.

It is recognised that no one is perfect. Each one of us is on a life-long journey to be fully who God calls us to be. There are parts of our lives that, at times, need conversion, just as there are parts of our Church that need conversion and renewal.

Characteristics of Other Members of Synod (Observers and Participants)

Observers and Participants have been invited because of their commitment to the vision of the Diocese/parishes and their assistance in delivering the mission of the Church. Their knowledge and experience may contribute to the Synod discussions.

By being present at Synod and having a voice, they should be recognised by others as having:

- active involvement in a parish, agency, or ministry group within the Diocese
- a commitment to contributing to the Diocese becoming more Christ-like
- a commitment to discern with others what God wants for the whole Diocese
- a striving to live the gospel values in their family, work, and community activities – being loving, forgiving, hospitable, compassionate, supportive of the poor, and inclusive of all
- a desire and ability to listen with an open mind and heart and to weigh up all they hear, especially within the community they represent.

Requirements of Members of Synod

Members of Synod will be on a journey with each other and with the guidance of the Holy Spirit discern a future of the Church in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

All members of Synod need to commit to:

- being open to the Holy Spirit in their personal prayer and through the Synod
- reading Synod documents to learn more about the needs of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

- participating in formation and preparatory meetings
- attending a commissioning ceremony to take place at a Mass at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, unless COVID restrictions require alternative arrangements
- listening to and respecting the views of others and weighing up all they hear to discern what God wants
- working with others to build understanding and positive outcomes for the whole Diocese
- meeting with those who have discerned their attendance at Synod – especially in the six weekly reflection opportunities during Feb-March 2021 on the themes of the Synod
- participating in both full day sessions of the Synod:
 - Session 2 – Saturday 22 May 2021
 - Session 3 – Saturday 20 November 2021
- reporting back to their parish, agency, or group after each session of the Synod.

While not wishing to over-exaggerate the commitment, it is necessary to point out that those who become Members of Synod will be expected to engage actively in processes leading up to, and during the Synod sessions.

All Members of Synod have a right and duty to participate in the sessions of Synod. If they are unable to attend, a proxy cannot be sent in their place.

It is extremely helpful, but not essential, that Members of Synod have an email address.

Process for Appointment of Members of Synod

While Bishop Wright must approve the membership of each person coming to the Synod, membership will be selected as follows.

A letter from Bishop Wright inviting applications for membership of the Synod will be sent to individuals, parishes, agencies, groups, and ministries. This letter will include:

- Bishop's Pastoral Letter on the Synod
- composition of the Synod
- characteristics of Members of Synod
- requirements of Members of Synod
- selection of Synod Members, Observers, Synod Participants, and Interested People
- appointment of Members of Synod.

Applications must be returned by 31 March 2021.

The Bishop, upon advice of the Diocesan Synod Working Party, can accept late applications if these address under-representation from initial expressions of interest. Late applicants still need to complete formation and other requirements expected of all delegates.

The Synod Working Party will check that application forms contain all the relevant information. They will contact applicants if clarification is needed. The Synod Working Party will then provide Bishop Bill Wright with the list of the people for him to consider appointing as Members of Synod.

Selection of Members of Synod

The Instruction from Rome on Diocesan Synods states that *Canon 512 No 2 should be followed in so far as possible in the selection of members of the Synod*. Canon 512 No 2 states: "The members of Christ's faithful assigned to the Pastoral Council are to be selected in such a way that the council truly reflects the entire portion of the People of God that constitutes the diocese, taking account of the different regions of the diocese, of social conditions and professions, and of the part played in the apostolate by the members, whether individually or in association with others."

People who are discerned by a community service, educational ministry or other group may be current staff, volunteers, students, participants, service users, or parents.

The Bishop will issue invitations to complete the Expression of Interest Form to:

- all active clergy of the Diocese
- two representatives from the retired clergy
- all members of the Council for Mission
- lay people officially engaged as chaplains or pastoral ministers
- diocesan councils to invite their membership to discern their representatives
- religious Sisters/Brothers who will meet to discern the required number of people
- the parish leader who will invite parishioners to discern who will be invited to submit an application based on one person per 100 Mass attendance (2016 Mass Count)
(If this is not possible, the Parish Leader will invite any parishioner to submit their interest in participating in the Synod. They, preferably with the assistance of members of the Parish Pastoral Council, will discern equal numbers of men and women.)
- each primary school leadership team will invite their staff and parent body to discern the person/s to be invited (it is important that they be seen as part of the parish delegation)
- each secondary school leadership team will invite their staff and parent body to discern the person/s to be invited
- each secondary school leadership team (preferably with the advice of the student leadership team) will be invited to discern one per 200 students comprising equal numbers of male and female students, from Years 10, 11 and 12 to be invited to complete an Expression of Interest Form together with their parent/guardian
- with the advice of staff and parents/carers the leadership team of St Nicholas will discern up to eight people who will hear the voice of their community
- the leadership team of CatholicCare, who will discern up to eight people from staff and people they serve who will hear the voice of their community
- the members of the Operations Management Group of the Diocese
- each Catholic cultural group operating within the Diocese will discern one man and one woman
- the staff from Healing and Support (Zimmerman Service) will discern with their clients, people to be invited to attend the Synod
- each Catholic ministry operating in the Diocese but governed by other Church authorities, will discern representatives

- each Catholic movement operating in the Diocese will discern their representative.

It is understood that most members of Synod will come from parishes, ministry groups and agencies, wearing more than one hat, to represent the many aspects of our Diocese as a community of communities.

Role of a Member of Synod

While delegates represent their community or parish, it is not in the sense of a “political liaison” between Synod and constituency. Their role is not to lobby for a geographic or interest group as in a political gathering, but to ensure that the concerns, observations and needs of the whole diocesan community are presented to the Synod, and to report back to the parish, agency or community that discerned their attendance. To assist with this, each member of Synod is invited on a personal formation journey to ascertain a better understanding of the Diocese and one’s own faith.

Appointment of Members of Synod

The official appointment and commissioning of members of Synod will take place at the Mass that forms part of Bishop’s Reflection Days during April/May. Synod Members will be asked to recite and sign a Profession of Faith and an Oath of Fidelity. Synod Observers, Participants and Interested People will be asked to recite and sign Words of Commitment.

By May 2021, the Bishop will formally write to all those discerned to participate in the Synod. In that letter of appointment, he will confirm the appointment of Synod membership.

APPENDIX B

SYNOD PROCEDURES

A diocesan synod is an assembly of selected priests and other Christian faithful of a particular Church that offers assistance to the diocesan Bishop for the good of the entire diocesan community. (Canon 460)

On Saturday 22 May 2021 and Saturday 20 November 2021, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will hold Sessions Two and Three of the Diocesan Synod Assembly. The Synod Membership¹, although from various parishes and communities throughout the Diocese, gather as members of the Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle working for the good of the entire diocesan community.

During the process leading to Sessions Two and Three of the Synod Assembly, open and free discussion has taken place within the diocesan community on the papers for discussion. Members of Synod have been part of that process and will gather at the Synod Assembly to discern what action should be taken concerning the proposals contained in the papers.

The following procedures have been drawn up to facilitate this discernment and ensure all Members of Synod have equal opportunity to participate in it. These procedures are based on those used by the 1992-93 Diocesan Synod in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle.

PRESIDENCY

1. The Bishop presides over the Synod Assembly. He may delegate the Vicar General to fulfil this office at individual Sessions of the Synod Assembly. He will also appoint the Facilitator/s to oversee the Synod Assembly.
2. The Bishop, in accordance with Canon 466, is the sole legislator in the Diocesan Synod: he alone can give the Synod's decisions the force of the local law. Therefore, its decisions are presented to him for approval, and he alone signs the synodal declarations and decrees that can be published only through his authority.

FACILITATION OF THE SESSIONS OF SYNOD

3. Two facilitators will be responsible for the facilitation of agenda items of sessions of Synod. The second facilitator will remain at the main table in an adviser capacity to the one facilitating an agenda item.
4. The Facilitator has responsibility for order in the Synod Hall, directing speakers, supervising the voting procedure, and concluding the discussion. The Facilitator/s should keep the proceedings moving.
5. The Facilitator will call the Assembly to order for prayers according to the agenda and will indicate the breaks and the time for resuming after them.
6. Facilitation of agenda items of sessions of Synod will be determined by the Facilitators if there is more than one. The other remains at the main table in an adviser capacity to the one facilitating the agenda item.
7. The same Facilitator would not normally facilitate consecutive Sessions.

¹ **Synod Membership** refer to those **Delegates** who have been chosen to represent the various aspects of diocesan life.

SPEAKING IN THE HALL

8. Only Synod Members, Observers and Participants may participate during the Sessions, unless the Bishop directs otherwise. Members will stand at the rostrum to present their proposal (see §15).
9. The Facilitator will indicate who will speak. Time will be limited to allow as many speakers as possible. The Facilitator will give first preference to those members who have not yet spoken during the assembly and second preference to those who have not yet spoken during the current session.
10. Members will be expected to keep to the point, to develop the subject further without going over old ground and to be brief.

PRESENTATION OF PROPOSALS

11. All proposals to be put to the Synod Assembly are contained in the Synod Papers that all members will have received and studied in the week before the Synod Assembly.
12. Each Synod Foundation Paper will be presented to the Synod Assembly by a member of the Synod Working Party.
13. Proposals will then be put to the Synod Assembly one by one for resolution.
14. The role of the Synod Members is not to discuss the teachings of the Church, or the rationale of the work of the Synod Working Party but rather:
 - a. the merits of the proposal/recommendations
 - b. the pastoral importance of the proposal
 - c. whether it should be accepted for implementation.
15. Members of Synod will bear in mind that the Synod Papers have resulted from a lengthy consultation process and the Synod Working Party's attempts to be faithful to the voices of those who have been involved with that process.
16. Before the Assembly, members of Synod who wish to speak to their proposal are asked to give notice of this on the form provided.
17. Speakers, when called by the Facilitator, will identify themselves and their parish, agency, or organisation.
18. Each speaker is allowed a maximum of two minutes. A warning bell will sound at 90 seconds, and another will indicate when a speaker's time has expired.
19. Each proposal will be presented either by the proposer or by the Facilitators.
20. Any Member of Synod who introduces matters not contained in the papers under discussion will be ruled out of order.
21. The Facilitator/s will seek the mind of the Synod Members on each proposal by voting procedures.
22. Synod Members will decide whether the proposal will be recommended for:
 - adoption (green)
 - rejection (red).
23. A Theological and Canonical Consultancy Panel will be on hand to answer immediate questions should they arise. As advisers to the Synod, they are unable to participate in the voting process.

24. A final vote for each Synod Foundation Paper will be taken in answer to the question:

As disciples of Christ, will this Foundational Paper (incorporating minor modifications), lead us to be a Christ-centred Church?

- adoption (green)
- rejection (red).

ADMINISTRATION

25. The Synod Moderator shall be responsible for all aspects of the running of the Synod: Secretariat, Technology, Liturgy, Hospitality and Security.

26. All involved with the Synod Assembly will be registered as being Synod Members, Observers, Synod Participants, Interested People, Administration, Wardens, Secretariat, Liturgy, Hospitality, and so on.

ADMISSION TO THE SYNOD HALL/HUB

27. Members of Synod will have free access to the Synod Hall/Hub, but others have access only in accordance with their approved function, for example couriers, recorders, secretaries, reporters and so on.

28. Members of Synod, and support staff, have a special place of trust in the Synod Hall/Hub and they are expected to honour that trust.

29. Under the Synod Moderator, a group of Wardens will be responsible for supervising entry to the Synod Hall/Hubs and environs. All are asked to co-operate with their requests.

SECRETARIAT

30. There will be two Recorders for each agenda item, who shall write a summary of proceedings.

31. At the end of the Session Two, the Recorders will draft the Minutes. They will submit the drafts to the Facilitator of the relevant agenda item before distributing them. Copies will be made available to the Bishop, the Recorders, the Facilitators, and the Diocesan Synod Working Party.

32. Copies of the Minutes will be distributed to the Synod Members as soon as possible.

LITURGY

33. The Synod Liturgy Group will be responsible for all the liturgical functions during the Synod Assembly. Members are asked to co-operate with them when asked to read and otherwise participate in the prayer life of the Synod Assembly.

HOSPITALITY

34. Hospitality groups are responsible for accommodation and all Synod meals. Morning and afternoon tea and lunch will be available for all members and Support Staff.

CONCLUSION

35. Our Synod Assembly is not just a business Assembly, but an experience of our diocesan Church gathered to be of assistance to our Pastor. We have come from different directions, different backgrounds, with different hopes and aspirations, but we are united by the prayer of our brothers and sisters of our Diocese who are not there. Their prayer is that the Holy Spirit will be with us so that we will make God's thoughts our own and God's desires for our diocesan Church a reality.

APPENDIX C

DIOCESAN SYNOD PROCESSES

MEMBERS OF SYNOD (DELEGATES) INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

1. The Diocesan Synod 2019-2021, to be held in three sessions, invites the People of God to carefully discern together what the Spirit is saying to the Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and to agree on common goals and actions for the coming years.

Session One – Celebration – 23 November 2019

Session Two – Discernment – 22 May 2021

Session Three – Implementation – 20 November 2021

2. Our diocesan Synod is being held in conjunction with the Plenary Council of Australia. During 2019, our people were asked to respond to the Plenary Council question:

What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?

and the Diocesan Synod question:

As disciples of Christ, what needs to happen in our hearts and in our minds and in our community for us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:

- *missionary and evangelising*
- *inclusive, participatory and synodal*
- *humble, healing, and merciful*
- *prayerful and eucharistic*
- *a joyful, hope-filled and servant community*
- *open to conversion, renewal and reform?*

These six areas are the themes coming from the Plenary Council process.

SYNOD WORKING PARTY

3. The Synod Working Party carries out the duties of the Council for Mission (CfM), on behalf of Bishop Bill. It has been meeting monthly since 2018 to co-ordinate the many processes for our diocesan Synod.

The members of this Working Party are:

- Teresa Brierley – Moderator, CfM Executive Secretary, Director Pastoral Ministries
- Helen Belcher – Co-chair CfM, Parishioner, Plenary Council delegate
- Lawrie Hallinan – Co-chair CfM, Parishioner
- Michael O'Connor – CfM Member, Parishioner
- Sr Patricia Egan – CfM Member, Parishioner, Religious, Connection to previous Synod processes
- Ben van der Wijngaart – CfM Member, Parishioner
- Bernadette Gibson – Head of Religious Education and Spirituality for the Catholic Schools Office, Plenary Council Delegate

- Helene O’Neill – CfM Member, Parishioner, Family Ministry Coordinator
- Gary Christensen – Director CatholicCare
- Fr Geoff Mulhearn – Council of Priests
- Uta France – Liturgy Council

Staff Assisting the Working Party:

- Alyson Segrott – Executive Assistant to Director Pastoral Ministries
- Jenny Harris – Administrative Assistant Pastoral Ministries
- Rachel James – Head of Communications
- Brooke Cross – Marketing and Communications Manager
- Sarah James - Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator

Planning Cycle

4. The following organising cycle or planning model is helpful for our Synodal processes:



FOCUS GROUPS FOR THE SYNOD

5. Focus Groups have been created on behalf of the Diocesan Synod Working Party. Their tasks are to focus on the different aspects of the Synod. The work of the Focus Groups is ongoing with some work not ready for tabling at Session Two of Synod but with the hope of presenting this at Session Three of Synod.
6. The Synod Focus Groups are:
 - **Foundational Guiding Principles:** To develop a spiritually inspiring document that reflects the vision of how we the Church of Maitland-Newcastle will work together to further Jesus' mission in today's world.
 - **Discernment of Data:** To process data relevant to the Plenary Council and Diocesan Synod that has been generated thus far within and beyond the Diocese, and from that data develop recommendations for discernment by the diocesan community and in time by the Synod. Focus Teams were established for each of the five foundations. The diocesan Data and Analytics Team will provide an objective analysis of data that has been collected since our last Synod.
 - **Diocesan Directory:** To compile and review all the documentation that has provided direction for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle since the previous Diocesan Synod of 1992-93 and recommend the ongoing ratification or abrogation of that documentation.
 - **Governance Guiding Principles and Documentation:** To develop clear documentation concerning the governance structures of the Diocese, parishes and agencies and the principles on which the diocesan community is governed both canonically and legally. There is a need to honour the principles of synodality, transparency, inclusivity, accountability, and stewardship.
 - **Event Planning:** To develop processes for planning and co-ordinating in managing each of the Synod sessions.
 - **Liturgy Planning:** To assist in the creation of prayer and worship resources in preparing for and conducting the Synod.

OVERALL TIMELINE FOR THE DIOCESAN SYNOD AND PLENARY COUNCIL

23 NOVEMBER 2019

Session One of Diocesan Synod – Listening and Dialogue

NOVEMBER 2019 to OCTOBER 2020

Preparation of Synod Discernment Session Two by the Synod Working Party

- Diocesan feedback from the Plenary Council and Synod was arranged by the Synod Working Party according to the five foundational aspects of the life and mission of a community of Jesus' followers – Identity and Community; Worship and Prayer; Formation and Education; Mission and Outreach; Leadership and Structure

NOVEMBER 2020

Publication of the Diocesan Synod Working Documents (**Foundation Papers**) based on the Foundational Guiding Principles and Discernment of Data Focus Groups

DECEMBER 2020 to FEBRUARY 2021

Preparation for the discernment of delegates by local Church community for the Diocesan Synod

FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2021

Formation of Delegates who will be appointed and commissioned as Synod Members

Reflecting on the Synod during Lent:

- Background Reading on Foundation Papers
- Reflection Groups using a contemplative dialogue process convened and led by Synod Delegates for all
- Feedback from individuals and groups via website Forum

APRIL TO MAY 2021

Reflection Days with Bishop Bill

Appointment and commissioning of the members of Synod – Synod Members, Observers, Participants, and Interested People

Further formation of members of Synod

Review of Foundation Papers

Written proposals via the website by members of Synod who wish to speak at Synod

Announcement of Diocesan Synod Discernment Agenda and Proposals

Video Presentations from Synod Theologians and Canonist

22 MAY 2021

Session Two of Synod – Discernment

MAY TO NOVEMBER 2021

Prayerful discernment of the proposals from the Session Two of Synod

Synod Focus Groups and Synod Working Party continue to prepare material for Session Three of Synod

3 – 10 OCTOBER 2021

The first Assembly of the Plenary Council

20 NOVEMBER 2021

Session Three of Synod – Implementation

NOVEMBER 2021 ONWARDS

Process begins to enact the decisions voted upon at the Diocesan Synod Assembly

4 – 9 JULY 2022

The second Assembly of the Plenary Council to be held in Sydney

AUGUST 2022

Process begins to enact the decisions voted upon at the Plenary Council Assemblies

Session Two of Synod – Decision making by Discernment

Preparation for Session Two of Synod

7. The Church of Maitland-Newcastle is centred on Christ, the cornerstone, and seeks always to live as a community of people who believe and are missionary disciples.

From Lent until Pentecost the people of the Diocese will be invited, through a process of contemplative dialogue, to discern more fully **the framework** for considering *Building the Kingdom of God Together* in our Diocese.

The purpose of the diocesan reflections during Lent is to enable all members of the diocesan community to respond to the **Five Foundation Papers** developed by the Synod Working Party for the Session Two of Synod.

People are being invited to explore our life and mission as the church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle through our five foundations:

1. Identity and Community
2. Worship and Prayer
3. Formation and Education
4. Mission and Outreach
5. Leadership and Structure

8. Each Foundation Paper includes:

Our Story	looks to the Acts of the Apostles for an overview of how the first Christians lived out their discipleship within the parameters covered by the five foundations. The story morphs to our own time and place to briefly present our continuity with the first Christian communities – and to challenge how we may better emulate the ideal presented of our origins.
Foundational Statements	were developed from the work of the Foundational Guiding Principles Focus Group. They serve to remind us of what should characterise communities who are committed to Jesus’ mission of bringing the Good News of God’s love to our world. It is hoped that from these we will be able to develop Foundational Guiding Principles for the whole Diocese.
Concerns	summarise related issues raised by diocesan respondents to the Plenary Council Listening and Dialogue Sessions as well as those who submitted written responses at the first session of our Diocesan Synod in November 2019. These were developed by the Foundational Focus Teams working with the Discernment of Data Focus Group. They attempted to honestly reflect what they heard people saying without making judgment.
Recommendations	are mostly general statements that suggest what could be done to address the issues raised in the preceding section (Concerns). In many cases they will involve personal and communal conversion and/or actions at local community level.

Synod Membership

9. Nominations for delegates were called from members of the Diocese so those who participate in the Synod are a true reflection of the entire portion of the people of God who constitute the Diocese, taking account of the different regions of the Diocese, of social conditions and professions, and of the part played in the apostolate by the members.
10. Delegates will then be appointed by the Bishop into one of the following categories as **Members of Synod**:

Synod Member – Synod members will be required to sign the Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity. They would be able to **speak** from the floor of Synod and **would have voting rights**.

Observers – According to Canon 463 §3 the Bishop can invite ministers or members of other Christian Churches or ecclesial communities not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who have a close connection to the Diocese, to be Synod observers. They may wish to contribute to the discussions of Synod but have **no voting rights**.

Synod Participant – Some of those who have been invited to be delegates may not be able to sign the Profession of Faith and Oath of Fidelity. They have been invited because of their commitment to the vision of the Diocese/parishes and their assistance in delivering the mission of the Church. Their knowledge and experience may contribute to the Synod discussions and so they have a voice but **no voting rights**.

Interested People – There may be people who wish to be invited because of their interest in the Catholic Church and the work of the Synod and/or who are unable to be Synod members because of the substantial commitment required. They may be present at sessions of Synod with **neither voice nor voting rights**.

These appointments and commissioning will take place during the Mass as part of the six Bishop's Reflection Days (13 April – 4 May).

Review of Foundation Papers

11. During the Lenten Contemplative Dialogue, the members of Synod will have listened to participants' responses to the material prepared by the Focus Groups on the Five Foundation Papers.

Participants will also be invited to provide feedback by way of the Synod Forum linked to the diocesan Synod website (by Monday 12 April).

Submissions (Following Contemplative Dialogue)

13. In preparation for Session Two the people of the Diocese are invited to consider the Foundation Papers. The purpose is to determine if they provide the basis for an overarching spiritual framework that can guide our life as a faith community. It is not intended to be legislative in nature.

Diocesan Synod Agenda and Proposals

14. As a result of the feedback, the Synod Working Party will amend the Foundation Papers that will then become the **Synod Papers** for Session Two of Synod. These will be sent to all delegates/members of Synod by 4 May.

Upon receipt of these Synod Papers, members of Synod will be asked to consider for each Synod Paper:

Are you satisfied that this paper reflects the direction you believe the Holy Spirit is leading us?

What, if anything, do you think needs to be modified, added or deleted?

15. A member of Synod who wishes to make a further modification to a Synod Paper will indicate this by posting a **written proposal**, using the electronic template provided (**Appendix E**), on the Synod website Forum. The proposal must clearly state the proposed modification and reasons for suggesting it.

The deadline for this is 10 May.

All Synod Members will be expected to study these proposals in preparation for the 22 May event.

16. Given the limitations of time (maximum of one hour only for each Synod Foundation Paper) Members of Synod who wish to speak at the Synod session (either for or against any proposal) will be limited to two minutes.

If individuals wish to speak to more than one paper, the Facilitators along with the Synod Working Party, will ensure subject to time constraints, that all who wish to speak can do so.

The agenda including proposals will be distributed to members of Synod by 14 May. (**See Appendix D**)

Further Formation of Synod Members

17. In preparation for the May 22 session, members of Synod will be invited to attend some further formation on diocesan Synods, processes, and technology.

May Gathering of Synod Delegates (Multimodal Hubs)

18. While it is preferable that members be physically present, at times they may participate via an electronic means. The decision to use electronic means lies with the bishop.

In planning for Session Two on Saturday 22 May consideration was given to COVID-19. Ideally it would best to gather in one place but that seems impractical, therefore the plan is to gather in several hubs, probably five or six, linked through technology. About 50 people will gather in each hub. Hospitality and administrative support will be provided in each hub.

The Events Planning Focus Group is exploring locations and technology options for conducting a “hybrid model” of holding the Synod. At this stage, the preference is for the hubs to be in our schools.

Given this hybrid model of holding Session Two of Synod we may be able to open this up to **interested people** via the use of technology.

Proposed Agenda for Session Two of Synod

19.

Time	Agenda Item	Process/Who
8.15am	Registration	Gathering
8.45am	Acknowledgement of Country Prayer Opening of Session Two of Synod	Video Synod Liturgy Team Bishop Bill Facilitators
9.30am	Identity and Community	Process
10.30am	Morning Tea	
11.00am	Worship and Prayer	Process
12.00pm	Formation and Education	Process
1.00pm	Lunch	
1.45pm	Mission and Outreach	Process
2.45pm	Leadership and Structure	Process
3.45pm	Break	
4.00pm	Reflection from Theologians (five minutes each) Reflection from Canon Lawyer (five minutes) Reflection from Bishop Bill (five minutes) Where to from here? Preparation for Session Three Prayer	Theologians Canon Lawyer Bishop Bill Facilitators
5.15pm	Finish	

Proposed Process for the Day (See Appendix B for further detail)

The following processes are suggested for each of the Five Foundations:

20. Part One – Our Story, Prayer and Reflection (10 minutes)

21. Part Two – Considering the Synod Foundation Paper (45 minutes)

Each of the Synod Foundation Papers will be presented by a member of the Synod Working Party to the Bishop and the members of Synod.

Before the Assembly, members of Synod who wish to speak to their proposal will be asked to give notice of this on the form provided. **(Appendix E)**.

Each speaker is allowed a maximum of two minutes. A warning bell will sound at 90 seconds, and another will indicate when a speaker's time has expired.

The Facilitator/s will seek the mind of the Synod Members on each proposal by voting procedures.

Synod Members will decide whether the proposal will be recommended for:

- adoption (green)
- rejection (red).

22. Part Three – Voting

Having reviewed the Synod Foundation Paper, listened to people during the Lenten reflections, studied the feedback on the Synod forum, and considered advice provided by the theologians, canon lawyer and the Bishop, Synod members will consider and vote on the question:

As disciples of Christ will this Foundation Paper (incorporating minor modifications), lead us to be a Christ-centred Church?

- adoption (green)
- rejection (red).

23. Adoption – Given the time limitation, support of the voting on the proposals and Foundation Papers will be based on a substantial majority vote. If the vote is divided further discernment will be necessary.

Synod Members are encouraged to consider an adoption vote based on: "Can I live with this decision even if I would prefer it to be somewhat different?"

24. Reflections, Final Question and Future Direction

Our theologians, canon lawyer and Bishop will be invited to reflect upon the day's proceedings and outcomes.

Post Session Two of Synod

25. The task of the Synod Working Party, its associated Focus Groups, the Council for Mission, and the Council of Priests is to listen deeply during the gathering of the members of Synod at Session Two of Synod, review the information provided by this session and prepare for Session Three.

Time may not permit for Session Three of Synod to legislate how each recommendation will be implemented, nor should it be concerned with legislating such details. The implementation of recommendations will be the responsibility of individuals and of parish/school/agency communities.

26. Session Three of Synod may recommend to the Bishop the need to legislate for an accountability framework for which the various diocesan communities are accountable for how they implement the recommendations by submitting a report – for example, at least biennially – to the Council for Mission and the Council of Priests.

To assist communities in the process of implementation, the Synod Working Party might commission some groups during the May to November period, to take one of the Foundation Papers and submit a plan for how they would go about implementing its recommendations. This plan might be offered as a guide to other groups.

Session Three of Synod (Action)

27. Depending on the outcomes of the Session Two of Synod, Session Three should clearly set a direction, of common goals and actions for the Diocese (**the how**) for the coming years.

The purpose of Session Three of Synod would be to reach consensus on whatever formal proposals may be put to it, which may then become local law. The recommendations to Session Three will be in the form of statutes that are based on all input and Church teachings.

Everyone across the Diocese will be held accountable.

28. The outcome may be in the form of several directives (Mandate). These could include:

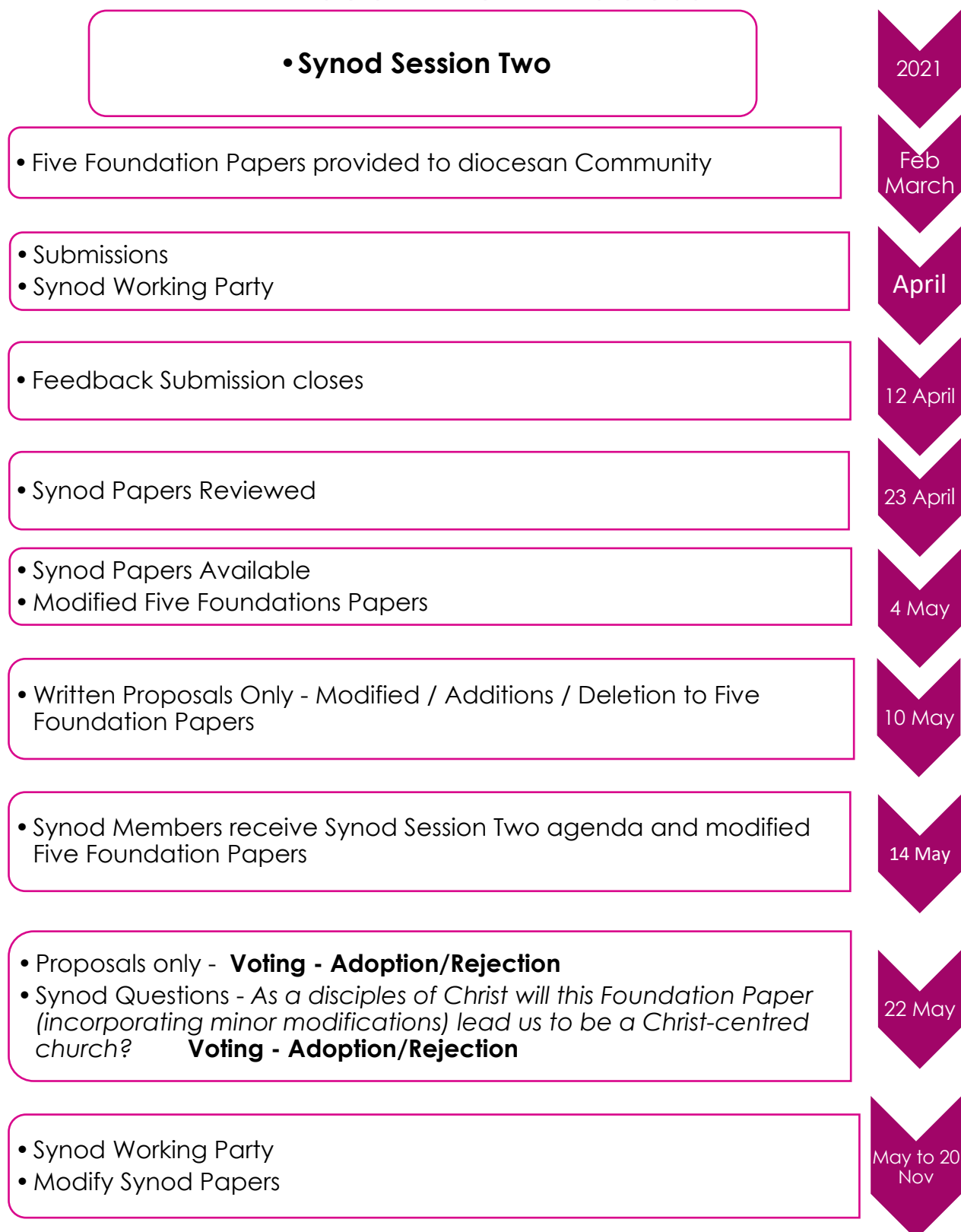
- Re the Foundation Papers
 - that the Five Foundation Papers (as finally accepted) be adopted by the Synod as a framework for our mission of *Building the Kingdom of God Together* in our Diocese.
 - that every parish, school, agency, and organisation submit a report biennially to the Council for Mission and the Council of Priests on how they have implemented the spirit and recommendations of the Foundation Papers.
- Re the Governance Focus Group's work
 - whatever decision comes from it
- Re the Diocesan Directory Focus Group
 - review and abrogation of previous documents and the acceptance of the new directory.

29. It may be that Session Three of Synod provides only a diocesan direction and not a direction for our parishes. If that is the case, then a fourth session of Synod may need to be held:

- to consider the implications for parish life
- to celebrate the outcomes of our synodal journey
- to review the outcomes of the Plenary Council and their impact on the pastoral planning of our Diocese.

APPENDIX D – DIOCESAN SYNOD DISCERNMENT FLOW CHART

Diocesan Synod Discernment Process



APPENDIX E

Session Two – Proposal for the Diocesan Synod Papers

Introduction

The Synod Papers are made up of Five Foundation Synod Papers:

- Identity and Community
- Worship and Prayer
- Formation and Education
- Mission and Outreach
- Leadership and Structure

These papers are modifications of the original Foundation Papers. The modifications are based on the submissions, following the Contemplative Dialogue process – *Building the Kingdom of God Together – Our Journey*.

Each paper contains the following elements:

- A summary paragraph of concerns
- Our Story
- Foundational Statements
- Recommendations

If you believe that further additions, deletions, or modifications need to be made, you are invited to complete an electronic form on our website <https://www.domnsynod.com.au>

A member of the Synod Working Party may contact you to discuss your proposal.

Your proposal will be sent to the members of Synod (excluding your contact details) for their consideration. Only Synod Members will be given the opportunity to vote.

Details

Name of Proposer:

Contact Details:

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____

Category of member of Synod: (please select)

- Synod Member
- Synod Participant

Proposal for Synod Foundation Paper (please select)

- Identity and Community
- Worship and Prayer
- Formation and Education
- Mission and Outreach
- Leadership and Structure

Element of Synod Foundation Paper for the Proposal (please select)

- A summary paragraph of concerns
- Our Story
- Foundational Statements
- Recommendations – Number

Proposal

Background to the proposal (addition, deletion, modification, new idea) – 250 words or less (30 lines)

Wording of proposal (to be voted on) – 30 words or less (6-7 lines)

I propose that ...

I wish to speak to this proposal at Session Two of the Diocesan Synod:

- Yes
- No

If you do not wish to speak to your proposal, one of the facilitators will read out your proposal before the vote is taken.

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

The following terms are used in planning documents.

Accountability	A noun that describes accepting responsibility, and it can be personal or very public. A government has accountability for decisions and laws affecting its citizens; an individual has accountability for acts and behaviours. Sometimes, though, taking accountability shows ownership and a willingness to admit mistakes.
Adult Faith Formation Council	Adult Faith Formation Council co-ordinates and supports the ministry of faith formation across the Diocese with a view to identifying areas of need, responding and providing opportunities for formation in faith.
Associate Pastor (AP)	An associate pastor is an ordained priest appointed by the Bishop "to serve in pastoral ministry as a co-worker with the parish priest in common counsel and endeavour with him and under his authority". (Canon 545) He may be a recently ordained priest or a priest who because of health, age or for some other reason is unavailable for appointment as a parish priest. He can be assigned to assist in the overall pastoral ministry of a parish, a definite part of the parish, or a certain group within the parish; he can also be assigned to assist in fulfilling a certain type of ministry in different parishes concurrently.
Canon Law	The Canon Law of the Catholic Church is the system of laws and legal principles made and enforced by the hierarchical authorities to regulate its external organisation and government and to order and direct the activities of Catholics toward the mission of the Church. The 1983 Code of Canon Law contains 1752 canons. The supreme law in the Church is the salvation of souls. <i>(Canon 1752)</i>
Caritas	Caritas is the Catholic Church's agency for overseas aid and development. It is part of the international Caritas network, supporting aid and grassroots programs in nearly every developing country.
Catholic Development Fund (CDF)	The CDF assists with the management of the finances for the Diocese (parishes, schools etc) and also offers members a range of investment and savings products. The Fund's main aim is to assist the Church achieve its pastoral mission. Members' funds are used to enable diocesan and parish projects to be completed at low costs – in other words our parishes, schools and diocesan groups do not have to borrow money commercially. More importantly, however, all the CDF's surplus is used to help the Diocese.
Catholic Mission	Catholic Mission is the official mission aid agency of the Catholic Church providing practical, spiritual, and emotional support to communities in 160 developing countries, encouraging all people to be active participants in partnership with the Church world-wide.
Catholic Schools Office (CSO)	The Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Newcastle is responsible for the leadership, efficient operation and management of systemic schools that educate approximately 20,000 students in 58 schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. The CSO employs more than 2000 teaching and non-teaching staff. The CSO's main focus is providing support for schools and helping to ensure that every student receives a quality Catholic education. The CSO is modelled on the person of Jesus Christ as revealed in the Gospels and through the teachings of the Catholic Church.

CatholicCare (CC)	<p>CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning is the official agency of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. It is a not-for-profit registered charity that seeks to continue the mission of Christ and to offer opportunities for growth, healing and hope to all people. Its holistic support options are offered to those in need regardless of religion, age, gender, ethnicity, or physical and intellectual disability.</p> <p>Its programs are a combination of fee-for-service and government-funded, and are responsive to local needs that are at the heart of everything it does, working with people to address issues.</p>
Chaplaincy	<p>Today, Chaplaincy is a specialised ministry done by priests, deacons, religious or lay people. They are trained to provide care and support – personally, emotionally, physically, relationally, and spiritually. They listen, providing a safe environment for people to share their concerns and feelings. They help people work through life's issues. They assist in times of crisis and difficulty. In short, wherever there is a need; there the Chaplain needs to be.</p>
Christian Ministry	<p>Christian ministry is an activity carried out by Christians to express or spread their faith, the prototype being the Great Commission. It is the carrying forth of Christ's mission in the world, indicating that it is conferred on each Christian in baptism in order to serve.</p>
Church Worker	<p>A layperson who performs paid or unpaid work in the service of the Church. Church Workers, together with clergy and religious, contribute to the mission of the Church.</p>
Civil Law	<p>The system of law of a state or nation regulating ordinary private matters as distinct from laws regulating criminal, military, political or religious affairs.</p>
College of Consultors	<p>From among the members of the presbyteral council and in a number not less than six nor more than 12, the diocesan bishop freely appoints some priests who are to constitute for five years a college of consultors, to which belongs the functions determined by law. When the five years elapse, however, it continues to exercise its proper functions until a new college is established.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Canon 502 §1)</i></p>
Compliance	<p>Compliance is what you do when you try to fit standards set down by someone else.</p>
Contemplative Dialogue	<p>Contemplative dialogue is about engaging meaningful conversations that are based on deep receptive listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listen for Understanding – discerning listening with respect for all. Listen under the words spoken. ● Speak from the Heart, Mind, Intuition – speak intentionally, choosing language that invites others in. ● Suspend Judgment – let go any need to have a right answer; try to suspend certainty. Be vigilant about resistance, cynicism, fear. ● Hold Spaces for Differences – embrace all points of view; there are different ways of thinking, believing, valuing, perceiving; change the “buts” to “ands”; remain open to all outcomes. ● Slow down – let there be spaces, pauses, silences in dialogue. <p>A group that engages in contemplative dialogue pays attention to the field of relationship (the “WE space”) among the members. This slow-moving manner of dialogue deepens the sense of union. The intention is to move beyond the personal as people probe significant ideas together and listen deeply for truth in another's point of view. Contemplative dialogue is a means of readying the ground for collective transformation, for helping shift from I to WE, from individualism to communion.</p>

Council for Mission	<p>The Council for Mission is a key strategic diocesan advisory group to the Bishop. Its purpose is to provide the prophetic voice of the Spirit and a broader vision, so God's mission is revealed and lived out actively within and outside the local Church.</p> <p>People will be chosen and called, because of their specific gifts. The intention is that the Council be a representative group, not a group of representatives. By building up a sense of trust and unity among all peoples, the Diocese will be recognised as a visible and credible sign and instrument of communion with God and so fulfil its mission.</p> <p>The Council for Mission fulfils the canonical role of the Diocesan Pastoral Council as per Canons 511 – 514.</p>
Council of Priests	<p>In each diocese a presbyteral council is to be established, that is, a group of priests which, representing the presbyterium, is to be like a senate of the bishop and which assists the bishop in the governance of the diocese according to the norm of law to promote as much as possible the pastoral good of the portion of the people of God entrusted to him.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Canon 495 §1)</i></p>
Curia	<p>The diocesan curia consists of those institutions and persons that assist the bishop in the governance of the whole diocese, especially in guiding pastoral action, in caring for the administration of the diocese, and in exercising judicial power. <i>(Canon 469)</i></p>
Dean/Episcopal Vicar	<p>An Episcopal Vicar is a priest appointed by the diocesan bishop who has the same ordinary power as the law gives to the Vicar-General, but this power is limited to a determined part of the diocese, to a specific type of activity, to the faithful of a particular rite or to certain groups of people.</p> <p>The role of the Episcopal Vicar is to co-ordinate pastoral activity and exercise pastoral care of the clergy in the deanery.</p>
Deanery	<p>Each diocese is to be divided into distinct parts or parishes.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Canon 374§1)</i></p> <p>To foster pastoral care by means of common action, several neighbouring parishes can be joined together in special groups, such as <i>vicariates forane</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Canon 374§2)</i></p> <p>The proposed structure for grouping parishes in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is "<i>vicariates forane</i>," or deaneries. Presently there are four Deaneries in the Diocese.</p>
Decision-making by Discernment	<p>In keeping with what it means to be and to build Church, we seek to arrive at decisions that all can accept gracefully and support wholeheartedly (even if some wish the decision had been different) because they know the group honestly searched together for the Spirit of God in and for the life of the community.</p> <p><i>Discernment of the Spirit ... listens to others so as to learn, is sensitive to all approaches, encourages collaboration rather than competition and aims not at majority vote but consensus. It recognises that each participant has a part of the truth and a share of the wisdom by reason of each one's unique experience of God in life, union with Christ and gifts of the Spirit. The process also recognises the right of each person to contribute his or her part without which the whole picture will not be presented and the whole wisdom of the spirit will not be available.¹</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Diocesan Pastoral Plan, 1992/93, Theological Principle 3.8)</i></p>

¹ Archbishop F Carroll, Canberra-Goulburn Synod, 1989

<i>Diocesan Council for Ministry with Young People (DCMYP)</i>	The Diocesan Council for Ministry with Young People (DCMYP) serves as an advisory body to the Bishop to foster a passionate, imaginative, and vibrant community of faith-filled people. The Council seeks to provide initiatives within the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle that give young people opportunities to experience, explore and develop their faith with other like-minded young people.
<i>Diocesan Ecumenical and Interfaith Council</i>	The Diocesan Ecumenical and Interfaith Council aims to promote and strengthen ecumenical and interfaith attitudes within the Diocese, facilitates and encourages growth of initiatives at parish and regional levels and offers advice to the Bishop on these matters. As a resource for the establishing of ecumenism throughout the Diocese, the Council assists the diocesan community to translate its vision and Pastoral Plan into action.
<i>Diocesan Leadership Group (DLG)</i>	The Diocesan Leadership Group meets regularly to provide a consultative forum so that mission, pastoral and strategic plans and decisions for the Diocese are realised to the highest standard.
<i>Diocesan Pastoral Ministries Team</i>	The Diocesan Pastoral Ministries Team provides support for parishes in their pastoral planning, supports the work of the Council for Mission and other diocesan councils and supports the many pastoral ministries of the Diocese.
<i>Diocesan Protection and Safety Council (DPSC)</i>	The Diocesan Protection and Safety Council (Council), established in January 2016, promotes the protection of children and vulnerable adults within the Diocese from abuse or exploitation. The Council is an advisory body to the Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle.
<i>Diocesan Social Justice Council</i>	The Diocesan Social Justice Council aims to reach out to those who are marginalised, discriminated against and impoverished. It assists diocesan and parish groups on social justice matters and practices when requested, and maintains communication with local, state, and national justice and peace bodies. The Council also facilitates the preparation of diocesan responses to current justice issues, instigates dialogue with and investigates issues of concern to marginalised people or communities and parishes.
<i>Diocesan Synod</i>	<p>Diocesan Synods are important instruments and occasions for effecting conciliar renewal. Hence, a Diocesan Synod is a formal assembly of priests, religious and lay people, representative of the whole diocesan community, who are invited by the Bishop of the diocese to advise him on matters concerning the good of the entire Diocese. The meaning of the word “Synod” is “journeying together”. Synods are instruments of collaboration, discernment, governance, and communion; the outcome of which results in declarations and decrees.</p> <p>It is the Synod that sets the direction for the Diocese in the form of a Diocesan Pastoral Plan. Synods make recommendations to the Bishop, who in turn makes decisions that set the local law for the Diocese.</p>

Diocese	<p>The Diocese is the most common form of a particular church, a portion of the people of God entrusted to a Bishop to be nurtured by him, with the co-operation of the <i>presbyterium (the clergy)</i>.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(Canon 369)</i></p> <p>Our parishes, agencies of the Church, the Catholic Schools Office and religious congregations assist the Bishop in nurturing the people of God who live within this local church. When referring to “the Diocese” as a general term in planning documents it includes the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Parishes ● Curia/Chancery: Bishop’s Office, Office of Safeguarding, Pastoral Ministries, Shared Services, ● Agencies: Catholic Schools Office, CatholicCare, Catholic Development Fund, and St Nicholas Early Learning ● Religious Congregations
Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (DOMN)	<p>The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle serves the people of the Newcastle, Hunter, and Manning regions with a population of some 155,000 Catholics. Through its parishes, pastoral groups, and its agencies of Catholic Schools, CatholicCare, St Nicholas Early Education, the Office of Safeguarding, the Catholic Development Fund and other activities, the Diocese provides faith, spiritual, pastoral, educational, social welfare, and community development. The Diocese employs approximately 4000 staff across its parishes and agencies.</p>
Disciple	<p>It derives from the Latin word <i>discipulus</i>, which means "student, learner, or follower". One of the earliest places disciple showed up was in the Bible, where it means "a follower of Jesus", sometimes specifically one of the 12 Apostles. It can also describe a serious, dedicated follower or student of a teacher or leader.</p>
Duty of Care	<p>Refers to the obligation to take responsible care to avoid harm or injury to a person when it can be reasonably foreseen, or the person might be injured or harmed by an act or omission.</p>
Evangelisation	<p>Evangelisation literally means announcing/proclaiming the Good News ("eu", meaning "Good" and "angelion", meaning "Message or News")</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Like good shepherds of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>(1 Peter 4:10)</i></p>
Finance Council (Diocesan and Parish)	<p>A Parish Finance Council (PFC) is required by Canon Law, and its role is to assist the parish priest in the administration of parish financial resources. Members of the Finance Council examine and monitor the financial situation of the parish or region and the maintenance of the parish plant and prepare and explain annual financial reports and budgets. The Finance Council does not set pastoral priorities but provides wise financial advice to the parish priest and the parish community. In general, the Finance Council looks to the Pastoral Council to set pastoral priorities. The Pastoral Council looks to the Finance Council for sound financial guidance.</p>
Formation	<p>In our context it is the intentional development of a person so that they grow in their understanding of who they are as a person in relationship with others.</p>

Governance	Governance is the system of rules, relationships and practices by which authority and control are exercised within organisations. It encompasses the systems, structures and policies that control the way in which any institution operates, and the mechanisms by which the institution, and its people, can be held to account. This is in service of the Church and its mission.
Guidelines	Guidelines state the organisation's general intent and treatment of specific issues. However, they are more flexible and can be adapted to meet the needs of particular situations.
Integrity	Having integrity means doing the right thing in a reliable way – having a moral compass that doesn't waver, having "wholeness" of character, just as an <i>integer</i> is a "whole number" with no fractions. It calls for loyalty to the gospel ahead of the institution.
LGBTIQ Catholic Forum	All members of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle LGBTIQ Catholic Forum (Forum) seek to affirm and to build the dignity of each person and to support them in their development to be the person God calls them to be.
Liturgy Council	The Liturgy Council is responsible to the Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle as the primary body to advise and assist him in his role as the chief liturgist of the Church of Maitland-Newcastle, and as the "moderator, promoter, and guardian" of the liturgical life of the Diocese. <i>(see CIC 835, §1).</i>
Many Parts. One Body. One Mission.	In May 2017, the Bishop met with senior leaders from across the diocesan chancery with the intention of taking active steps in aiding the curia to serve the Diocese better and to work better together. Consequently, it was decided to embark on a change management project known as Many Parts. One Body. One Mission . This proposed project has four parts to it: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instituting a Council for Mission for the whole Diocese, which will review our overall direction as Church, establish priorities for the development of our ministries, agencies and services; and foster collaborative initiatives between agencies. The Council will meet regularly throughout the year, and I am making this a matter of priority to establish. I will keep you apprised of our progress. 2. The Diocesan Executive will be expanded to include Directors of agencies to enhance information sharing and opportunities for joint planning and projects across the curia. 3. Existing agency Boards and Councils will be charged primarily with exercising governance of the agency directly, through each Director, and providing periodic reports to the Diocesan Executive. 4. Within the curia, bringing together resources and services that all areas of the curia may benefit from, which do not need to exist as separate units in each agency. This will enable agency leadership to focus on core business, reduce confusion across agencies and diminish duplication of staff and resources. This will also enable broader experience opportunities to staff in these areas.
Mass Centre	Some parishes, especially those that include several townships, have more than one church where Sunday Eucharist and other sacraments are celebrated. The term Mass Centre refers to the community that gathers at such a Church.

Mission	<p>In 1992-93, the diocesan community resolved to embrace and promote Vatican II's understanding of the Church's mission contained in the following: The Church, because it is the People of God and the Body of Christ enlivened by his Spirit, is called to be a sign and instrument of communion with God and of unity among all people (LG1). The Church exists to promote the Kingdom of God on earth (LG5). This it does by proclaiming Christ – the Good News of God's love for all people – and by working in the world for justice, peace, and reconciliation. We are called to live out the commandment of Jesus: "Love one another as I have loved you." (Jn 15:12)</p>
Moderator	<p>The principal role of the moderator is directing the team's common action, holding responsibility for that common action before the diocesan Bishop, and directing the exercise of faculties held by all team members. The moderator is also entrusted with the juridical representation of the parish or parishes.</p>
Office of Safeguarding (OoSG)	<p>The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an absolute and abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all children and vulnerable adults — particularly for those who participate in the life of the Diocese as part of our faith communities in parishes, in our diocesan systemic schools and early education centres, as part of our welfare and community services through CatholicCare, out-of-school hours care and other diocesan ministries.</p> <p>The office of the Director of Safeguarding has been established by decree, issued by the Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle.</p> <p>The Office of Safeguarding is an integral part of the Diocese, reporting directly to the Bishop's Office. The Office of Safeguarding is placed outside the Diocese's services, programs, and parishes, overseeing their safeguarding standards in operation.</p> <p>The Office of Safeguarding works with NSW Police, the Office of the Children's Guardian, the Department of Community and Justice and other statutory authorities and specialist authorities within the Catholic Church in Australia to fulfil its responsibilities and maximise the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults.</p>
Operations Management Group (OMG)	<p>The purpose of the Operational Management Group (OMG) is to provide strategic and corporate support to the Bishop and his Diocesan Leadership Group (DLG). The OMG is not a decision-making group but a collective of diocesan leaders who are able to facilitate and articulate to staff the vision and mission for the Diocese.</p>
Parish	<p>A parish is a certain community of Christ's faithful, stably established within a particular Church (parish), whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan Bishop is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor.</p> <p>Parishes are not ends in themselves, but they are the structural means whereby the work of the Church is carried out. The parish is not a branch of the diocese; the Diocese is not merely a collection of parishes.</p> <p>Given that the task of church ministry is evangelisation, the parish then becomes the means wherein and whereby such evangelisation can take place. The way in which each parish will live out its mission will depend on local needs and circumstances. Its administrative arrangements will vary accordingly.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Church Administration Handbook</i></p>

Parish Leader	<p>The Parish Leader exercises a leadership role of responsibility for the day-to-day functioning of a parish community in partnership with the Priest Supervisor.</p> <p>The Parish Leader is responsible for the normal pastoral and administrative duties of the community, with the exception of those duties and responsibilities reserved in general for an ordained priest or in particular the Parish Priest or Priest Supervisor, as specified by Canon Law and the diocesan Bishop, to assist in the pastoral care of the parish and to oversee the work of individuals and groups who serve the parish, and to offer pastoral care on a daily basis to parishioners.</p> <p>The Parish Leader is in effect “in charge” of the parish, leads the parish community, participates in the building of community, and leads in the functions of teaching, sanctifying and governing.</p>
Parish Leadership Team	<p>The Parish Leadership Team (PLT) is appointed by the Bishop and collectively provides leadership to the community by virtue of that appointment. Its function is not, like that of the more familiar Parish Pastoral Council, simply to <i>advise</i> the Priest Supervisor. It has its own proper “share” in the leadership of the community, a ministry of “pastoral care” that it will perform in collaboration with the Priest Supervisor. (Canon 517 § 2)</p>
Parish Priest (PP)	<p>A parish is a community of Christ’s faithful whose pastoral care is entrusted to a Parish Priest. He is the proper pastor of the community, caring for the people and celebrating the sacraments. In the exercise of his office the Parish Priest acts under the authority of the diocesan Bishop.</p>
Pastoral Associate (PA)	<p>A Pastoral Associate is a religious or lay person who works with the parish priest or Episcopal Vicar/Dean in the pastoral care of a parish and whose position is stable, public, and properly authorised. He/she, while not entrusted with “a share in the pastoral care of a parish” as specified in Canon 517.2, collaborates with the Pastor, Parish Pastoral Council and Pastoral Team in a wide range of parish activities that contribute to the building up of the parish as a community of faith, worship, healing, outreach, and pastoral care. He/she has an overview of parish life and shares in day-to-day decision – making, planning and implementation of diocesan and parish pastoral plans.</p>
Pastoral Coordinator	<p>A Parish Pastoral Co-ordinator is a person other than a priest who is entrusted with a share in the pastoral care of a parish community as specified by the diocesan bishop in accordance with Canon 517.2. This person exercises a leadership role of responsibility for the day-to-day functioning of a parish community in partnership with the parish priest or Episcopal Vicar (Dean) designated by the Bishop. He/she will be responsible for the normal pastoral and administrative duties of the community with the exception of those duties and responsibilities reserved in general for an ordained priest or in particular the parish priest or Episcopal Vicar/Dean, as specified by Canon Law and the diocesan Bishop.</p>
Pastoral Council	<p>In accordance with the 1992-93 Diocesan Pastoral Plan, Pastoral Councils in this Diocese are representative groups at parish, regional and diocesan levels, whose primary function is pastoral planning. In collaboration with their pastor, they evaluate the needs and resources of the relevant community and plan for its future development by listening to God’s people, helping them to discover what they need to live the gospel and enabling them, through the Spirit, to fulfil those needs. (1992-93 Diocesan Pastoral Plan)</p>

Pastoral Team	A Pastoral Team, in accordance with the 1992-93 Diocesan Pastoral Plan, plays a significant role in parish life. It has responsibility for organising and co-ordinating groups and activities within the local community as well as ensuring that pastoral plans are implemented. The Pastoral Team works closely with and is accountable to the parish priest and in general relieves him of many day-to-day, week-to-week organisational tasks.
Policies	Policy documents may be required by legislation. Organisations also sometimes devise policies in response to Church or other requirements.
Procedures	A procedure is a document that clearly states the steps to be taken and methods to be used in completing specific tasks.
Region	A region in this Diocese refers to a group of parishes within a particular geographical area that collaborate with one another in furthering the mission of the Church. There are 10 pastoral regions in the Diocese. <i>New Wine Into Fresh Wineskins</i>
Responsibilities	From the Latin <i>responsus</i> : “to respond”. A duty or obligation to satisfactorily perform or complete a task that one must fulfil.
Rights	The rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality.
Risk Management	Risk management is the identification, assessment, and prioritisation of risks followed by co-ordinated and economical application of resources to minimise, monitor, and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events or to maximise the realisation of opportunities. Risk management’s objective is to assure uncertainty does not deflect the endeavour from the business goals.
Safe Ministry	Enabling a safe environment of self/others/the Church.
Shared Services	In 2017, Bishop Bill introduced a Shared Services into the diocesan curia with a view of bringing together resources and services from which all areas of the curia and parishes may benefit. This aim was to enable agency leadership to focus on its core business, reduce confusion across agencies and diminish duplication of staff and resources. These shared services teams include: Administrative Services; Communications; Compliance; Legal and Risk; Data and Analytics; Enterprise Portfolio Management (EPMO); Finance; Human Resources; Property; Technology Services.
St Nicholas Early Education	St Nicholas Early Education is a community in which children and young people develop the cultural, spiritual, physical, and educational skills to belong in a contemporary world. Collectively, St Nicholas provides education services spanning early education, out of school hours care and vocational education.
St Nicholas Out of School Hours Service (OOSH)	St Nicholas OOSH is an out of school hours service providing high-quality education and care to children aged 5 – 12 years. Each St Nicholas OOSH service is staffed by a dedicated team of qualified child-care professionals.
Staff	Staff means everyone who works at a particular place. Staff refers to all employees at a business.

Stewardship	Acknowledging God as creator and custodian of all that we are and all that we have, our families, our talents, our faith, our wealth, our time, our very lives are all gifts from God. Stewards are caretakers of these gifts. Stewardship is receiving these gifts with gratitude. It is following faithfully, sharing our gifts lovingly and generously, living responsibly and possessing sensibly. Stewardship is responsible management of our gifts of time, talent, and resources. It enhances our relationship with God and each other. Being a “Good Steward” brings peace of mind and balance to our lifestyles.
Subsidiarity	Subsidiarity is vesting involvement and decision-making as close as possible to those impacted by the decision.
Synodality	Synodality is reflected as the People of God, walking together, gathering in assembly with all its members actively participating in its mission of evangelising. It is the act of making the path together. Synods seek to inspire missionary renewal and unity within the diocesan community. In this way they contribute to the shaping of the pastoral activities of the particular Church and lend continuity to its own liturgical, spiritual, and canonical traditions.
The Word	The Word of God passed onto us through our scriptures, traditions, experiences, and Church writings.
Training	A program designed for training in specific skills.
Tribunal	The Tribunal is both a pastoral and legal service of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Its primary role is to reach out and assist those people who have been divorced and may be seeking to remarry in the Catholic Church. This can also include those people who have remarried civilly after a marriage breakdown and now wish to have their new marriage recognised by the Church.
Trustees	The Trustees of the Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle (The Trustees) are a civil law body established by the Roman Catholic Church Trust Property Act of 1936. This act allows the Church to operate in the civil forum relating to the ownership of land. In unforeseen developments other civil legislation regards the Trustees as the body responsible in governance issues as the Trustees are the “civil owners”.
Vision	To live the joy of the Gospel and share it with the world.
Volunteer	A volunteer is someone who willingly performs a task/ offers a service.
Vulnerable person	(a) a child or children; (b) an individual aged 18 years and above who is or may be unable to take care of themselves or is unable to protect themselves against harm or exploitation by reason of age, illness, trauma or disability, or any other reason.



PROFESSION OF FAITH

I, _____ with firm faith believe and profess each and everything that is contained in the Symbol of faith, namely:

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

With firm faith, I also believe everything contained in the word of God, whether written or handed down in Tradition, which the Church, either by a solemn judgment or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, sets forth to be believed as divinely revealed.

I also firmly accept and hold each and everything definitively proposed by the Church regarding teaching on faith and morals.

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman Pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.

Signed: _____

Notarised by: _____

Bishop Bill Wright

Dated: _____

Dated: _____



**OATH OF FIDELITY
ON ASSUMING AN OFFICE
TO BE EXERCISED IN THE NAME OF THE CHURCH**

I, _____ in assuming the office of Synod Member promise that in my words and in my actions I shall always preserve communion with the Catholic Church.

With great care and fidelity I shall carry out the duties incumbent on me toward the Church, both universal and particular, in which, according to the provisions of the law, I have been called to exercise my service.

In fulfilling the charge entrusted to me in the name of the Church, I shall hold fast to the deposit of faith in its entirety; I shall faithfully hand it on and explain it, and I shall avoid any teachings contrary to it.

I shall follow and foster the common discipline of the entire Church and I shall maintain the observance of all ecclesiastical laws, especially those contained in the Code of Canon Law.

With Christian obedience I shall follow what the Bishops, as authentic doctors and teachers of the faith, declare, or what they, as those who govern the Church, establish. I shall also faithfully assist the diocesan Bishops, so that the apostolic activity, exercised in the name and by mandate of the Church, may be carried out in communion with the Church.

So help me God, and God's Holy Gospels on which I place my hand.

Signed: _____

Notarised by: _____

Bishop Bill Wright

Dated: _____

Dated: _____



WORDS OF COMMITMENT SYNOD PARTICIPANT

I, _____ in assuming the role of **Synod Participant** promise that in my words and in my actions, I shall be respectful of what the Catholic Church believes and teaches.

I understand that I assist with the delivering of the mission of the Church in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and its commitment to serve both the church and wider communities.

I am willing to take part in the synod processes so that when giving voice I not only reflect my own ideas but those with whom I work and serve.

I shall also faithfully assist the diocesan Bishop, so that the apostolic activity, exercised in the name and by mandate of the Church, may be carried out in communion with the Church.

Signed: _____

Notarised by: _____

Bishop Bill Wright

Dated: _____

Dated: _____



WORDS OF COMMITMENT INTERESTED PEOPLE

I, _____ in assuming the role of **Interested Person** promise that in my words and in my actions, I shall be respectful of what the Catholic Church believes and teaches.

I understand that I assist with the delivering of the mission of the Church in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and its commitment to serve both the church and wider communities.

I am willing to observe the synod processes with an understanding that I have neither a voice nor a vote at the formal sessions of synod.

Signed: _____

Notarised by: _____

Bishop Bill Wright

Dated: _____

Dated: _____



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