

Journey towards the Plenary Council Reflecting on a Theme for Discernment

Second Sunday of Advent 2020



HOW DO WE RE-BUILD TRUST?

FROM THE READINGS

Console my people, console them,' says your God ...

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. *Isaiah 40:1,3*

I will hear what the Lord God has to say, a voice that speaks of peace ...
Mercy and faithfulness have met; Justice and peace have embraced.

Psalms 85:10

John the Baptist was in the desert, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins ...

'After me is coming someone who is more powerful than me, and I am not fit to kneel down and undo the strap of his sandals. I have baptised you with water, but he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit.'

Mark 1:4,7-8

FROM POPE FRANCIS

What word or phrase stands out for you?

Each one of us is called to be an artisan of peace, by uniting and not dividing, by extinguishing hatred and not holding on to it, by opening paths of dialogue and not by constructing new walls.

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 284

Each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable.

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 215

Authentic social dialogue involves the ability to respect the other's point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and concerns.

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 203

Authentic reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved in conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation.

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 244

Those who truly forgive do not forget. Instead, they choose not to yield to the same destructive force that caused them so much suffering. They break the vicious circle; they halt the advance of the forces of destruction.

Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, 251

FROM A PLENARY COUNCIL THEME

How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is A Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community?

Take a few moments for stillness and prayer to respond to two of the challenges suggested in this theme paper, for your parish, community, a group, or for you personally:

How do we ...?

- re-build a culture of trust within our Church?
- repent of harm?
- respond with prayer and in practical ways to benefit the vulnerable and keep them safe?
- develop co-responsibility and dialogue between clergy and laity and build a culture of trust?
- develop opportunities for lay ministry and parish teams to serve fellow parishioners?
- adopt a mission-focused approach to accountability and transparency, ensuring material resources are used for the most appropriate areas?
- strengthen transparent decision making?
- set up fair and just processes for reviews of Church structures, administration and safeguarding functions?

Selection of suggested challenges summarised from Plenary Council Discernment Paper: A Joyful, Hope-filled & Servant Community.

[\[www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/\]](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/)





A PRAYER

God in Whom We Trust,
within and about us a voice cries out
to prepare a way in the wilderness.
You come to restore us to new life with you
and with one another.
Help us to prepare a way for you,
open to the new possibilities
you place before us. Amen.

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Acknowledgements: *How is God Calling Us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is A Joyful, Hope-filled & Servant Community? Continuing the Journey of Discernment toward the Plenary Council, Sydney:* Plenary Council, 2020 (Discernment Paper); Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, Encyclical Letter, 2020.

