

THE PLENARY COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

DECREES REGARDING PARISH RENEWAL

Decree 3

Called by Christ – Sent Forth as Mission Disciples

5. The Plenary Council affirms a culture of synodality for parishes, dioceses and eparchies, where healthy and fruitful relationships between clergy and laity “recognise different but complementary charisms and opportunities for co-responsibility”, and desire “consultative and collaborative approaches to governance at all levels in the Church.”

The emphasis on listening and discernment for a synodal Church reveals how the People of God may be more centred on Christ, build healthy and respectful relationships amongst ourselves, and be effective missionary disciples in the Spirit: . . . a Church which listens . . . realizes that listening is more than simply hearing. It is a mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the College of Bishops, the Bishop of Rome: all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the “Spirit of Truth” (John 14:17) in order to know what he “says to the churches” (Revelation 2:7) (Francis, “Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Institution of the Synod of Bishops”)

Decree 6

Formation and Leadership for Mission and Ministry

2. Throughout the dialogue and discernment of the Plenary Council, many recognised the need for appropriate formation and support to assist lay people in discerning and using their gifts wisely. The small group responses from the First General Assembly identified the need for a variety of formation opportunities for members of the Church from leaders of Catholic entities to parish family groups, from isolated parishes in the outback to Archdiocesan chanceries and for people in formal and informal roles.

Decree 7

At the Service of Communion Participation and Mission ~ Governance

Article 1. That dioceses and eparchies support parishes to establish and strengthen appropriate synodal structures by developing guidelines and providing resources for the flourishing of Parish Pastoral Councils, Parish Finance Committees, and other parish bodies