



## Church gathers for successful fourth session

Report by Cathy Spencer,  
Chair, Exiting 2010-2011 Synod Executive

A very successful Session 4 of the ongoing Synod process was held on Friday, September 2, 5.30pm-9.30pm and Saturday, Sept 3, 8.30am -3.30pm in the Catherine McAuley Auditorium at St Monica's College.

Facilitator Vicki Bell (Manager Employee Services Catholic Education Services) provided a focused environment for the 75 participants (clergy, lay parish/ministry representatives, school principals) from across the diocese to come together with Bishop Foley in the 'Martha/Mary' context of prayer and action.

The Cathedral parish provided very meaningful liturgies creating a prayerful focus as the platform for the business of the Synod meeting. Sr Therese Masterson (Cathedral parish Synod delegate) and the Cathedral Parish also organised committed Synod prayers who in the weeks prior to this session prayed for all participants and the Synod process – many thanks to the 270 "signed up prayers".

with suitable amendments as the operational guide for all future Synod meetings.

- Yearly **One Day** Synod Meetings incorporating **Reports and Proposals**.

**Bishop's Address** - Bishop Foley addressed the meeting Friday evening and gave an account of his stewardship of the Diocese over the last 12 months. A thematic synopsis of Bishop James' address is available by contacting the Synod Office on Ph 4046 5600.



### Saturday morning

#### Report to Synod

**Parish Reports** – the deans of all three deaneries presented on their 'profile, headline activities and challenges' for 2011 in relation to parish and deanery perspectives, stewardship and information sharing.

- Fr Pat McKenna – Northern Deanery
- Fr Kerry Crowley – Southern Deanery
- Fr John Newman - Western Deanery

**Diocesan agencies** presented reports on their 'purpose, profile, headline activities and challenges' related to their ongoing responsibilities and organisational stewardship across the diocese over the past year as a means of accountability and information sharing.

- Br Paul Hough, Acting Executive Director Catholic Education Services
- Helga Biro, Executive Director - Centacare
- Jasmin Sheehan, Acting Executive Director - Diocesan Finance and Administration

**Diocesan Organisations/Ministries** reports were acknowledged although not presented on the day due to time constraints.

All reports can be read at: [Report to Synod](http://www.cairns.catholic.org.au/SynodSess4.html) or follow the link from: <http://www.cairns.catholic.org.au/SynodSess4.html>

**Parish reports** (pp 2-20), **Agencies reports** (pp 21-70), and **Diocesan Organisations/Ministries reports** (pp 71-112)



### Friday evening

**Synod Progress Session 3 to Session 4** confirmed a number of outstanding outcomes from Session 3 and acknowledged and informed the Synod gathering of the work of the 2011 Executive which included the planning for the 2011 Synod Session, production of the Report to Synod document and re-establishing and supporting the Synod working parties as they produced proposals.

#### Outcomes:

- Endorsement of the [Synod Meeting Guidelines for Operation](#) document (draft Constitution/Charter, Session 3)



## Presented for Consideration – Proposals

The re-established Synod working parties then presented their proposals to the Synod meeting. Each of the four working parties sought to provide a proposal/s that addressed one of the 5 Key Issues of interest to the Synod (as defined from Session 2). There was also an independent proposal presented.

All reports can be read at: [Report to Synod](http://www.cairns.catholic.org.au/SynodSess4.html) or follow the link from: <http://www.cairns.catholic.org.au/SynodSess4.html>

## Key Issue 1 – Outreach and Evangelisation

### Networking Proposal

**Presenter: Sr Irene Masterson (Pastoral Leader Cooktown)**

*Pages 116-118 of Report to Synod*

**To set up ways for people involved in indigenous and regional/remote ministries to share info and intelligence, to support each other and get supported, and to co-ordinate their various activities.**

If supported by the body of the Synod - Recommendation of Working Party - Implementation: by the people themselves, most of whom will be at the Synod. If endorsed, those who are at the Synod would be requested to get together over morning tea or lunch to decide on the place and time for an initial gathering plus to make plans to contact anyone else who might benefit from being invited.

### Resource Centre Proposal

**Presenter: Sr Irene Masterson (Pastoral Leader Cooktown)**

*Pages 119-123 of Report to Synod*

**Make some funds available to the Resource Centre to be spent on Resources for the use, primarily, of other than school groups for the ongoing education for Catholics and for use by people engaged in outreach. Promote the use of the Resource Centre in a variety of ways.**

If supported by the body of the Synod - Recommendation of Working Party - Implementation: Members of this working party: Sr Therese Masterson, and Sr Irene Masterson.

### Testimonies Proposal

**Presenter: Barry Hoare (West Cairns Parish)**

*Pages 124-129 of Report to Synod*

**To produce, promote and distribute a DVD of personal testimonies from people in the diocese across age, gender, culture and religious slant, and to put a short description of these testimonies online so as to make them available individually as needed by email on request.**

If supported by the body of the Synod - Recommendation of Working Party - Implementation: Members of this working party, lead by Sr Therese Masterson, Mr Barry Hoare and Deacon Peter De Haas.

## Key Issue 2 – Building our Sense of Community

### Strengthening Parish Community Building Proposal

**Presenter: Elizabeth Hoare (West Cairns Parish Rep)**

*Pages 1130-134 of Report to Synod*

**The proposal is that an active community-building group be established in each parish in the Diocese.**

If supported by the body of the Synod - Recommendation of Working Party - Implementation: the 'Building Our Sense of Community Working Party' recommends that should this proposal be endorsed by the Synod, it be referred to Diocesan Priests and Parish Administrators for action with these individuals and the central/diocesan group to report against the three components of this proposal in the lead up to the 2012 Synod gathering.

## Key Issue 3 – Formation of Our Lay People

### Coordination of Lay Formation and Education Proposal

**Presenter: Alban Hunt (Deacon and Malanda Parish)**

*Pages 135-138 of Report to Synod*

**We, as diocese find a way of having a readily accessible point to gather and send out what is happening in formation and education in our whole diocese, and publish contact details for same.**

If supported by the body of the Synod - Recommendation of Working Party - Implementation: depends on Synod deliberations as to where this 'organising function' is situated and organised.

## Key Issue 4 – A Call to Our Youth

### A Call to our Youth proposal

**Presenter: Charles de Bella (Youth Ministry Innisfail Parish)**

*Pages 139-142 of Report to Synod*

**To set up practical infrastructure to facilitate the evangelisation and formation of youth**

We will see the evangelisation and formation of youth. This will be seen in increasing numbers of youth events, attendance by youth and their attendance at Mass.

Full time NET team for the Diocese, long term

School/Parish Campus Ministers in every deanery/College

Full time Diocesan Youth Minister

If supported by the body of the Synod Implementation – not advised by working party

## Independent Proposal

### Funeral Ministry Proposal

**Presenter: Fr John Newman (Western Deanery)**

*Pages 143-146 of Report to Synod*

**The establishment of lay and religious funeral ministry teams in every pastoral region of the diocese, including Lay Funeral Support Ministry, Grief Support Ministry and Ministry within Funeral Liturgy itself.**

If supported by the body of the Synod - Recommendation of Working Party - Implementation: Pastoral Care (Agency Based) Co-ordination, with the co-operation of parish leadership in various places.

## Discernment of proposals

Focus questions provided further opportunities for continued discernment and clarification for participants.

- *What are the positive aspects of this proposal that you want acknowledged?*
- *What enhancements / further development does this proposal require?*

Synod Participants were diligently rigorous in their discernment of all proposals. Each proposal was given due time and consideration by a table of 8 to 9 participant's (clergy, parish reps, schools principals) representative of the wide cross section of the whole diocese.





*Saturday afternoon*

## Learnings and Proposals from the Floor

After due consideration of all proposals, individuals were asked to advise their position on all seven proposals – whether they supported, supported as per amendments from Synod participants' feedback, or did not support each of the proposals.

Advice of the proposal consensus process and feedback will be given to all working parties by the incoming new Executive after they meet in November. Advice will then be distributed to the wider diocese. There was a great deal of discussion from the body of the Synod around other areas of concern possibly providing material suitable for fully developed proposals to come to the 2012 Synod Meeting. Nominations were also called from the Synod body for participants willing to be involved in already established working parties or to initiate new working parties willing to progress material provided below.

Suggestions and areas of concern clustered around a number of themes and have been grouped accordingly below:

### Vocation/Clergy

- Diocese's vocation promotion - encourage vocations to priesthood, religious life, marriage, single
- Consider sending consecrated hosts to remote areas (Eucharist by post or courier)

### Stewardship, Laity

- Audit/assess current practice for lay formation
- Coordinated plan of implementation of laity into our parishes
- Retreats for lay people
- Formation of Laity
- Suggestion: Curscilo, ALPHA programme be promoted
- That this Diocese sponsor a stewardship institute to foster the formation of lay people and renewal within the Diocese
- Stewardship - building community in parish, tapping into people's strengths
- Stewardship across the diocese / at a diocesan wide level
- Stewardship Institute in the sense of discipleship
- Invite charismatic style priests, religious, lay from other areas to come and speak at dinners

### Youth Ministry

- Practical formation program for post-school youth and young adults in Christian discipleship - character development, faith formation, experience and community
- Possibility of a Diocesan Social Committee

### Communication

- Develop a comprehensive website: 'one stop shop' - the supermarket of all we have to offer; networking; resources centre; testimonies; call to youth; lay formation; "Catch all" website, publication, media
- Mobile bookshop
- Diocesan website - contains different agencies, update of proposals. RSS feed that allows people to be automatically updated via email. Could have humour or physical resources on this website

- Church of Cairns is good news and we need to make it known
- Continue to build profile of Diocese and make it known - how do we do this?
- A well developed profile of the diocese needs to be formulated
- How do we use the media to our advantage? - make known the good news that is happening. So much is happening in terms of works, vision and formation
- Need an entity/person to deal with information
- Continue to build the profile of Diocese

### Inclusiveness

- How to go about being more intentional about being culturally inclusive in mass with our migrants and refugees
- How Church best cares for refugees and supporting Helga in Centacare, ie Scherger, Cooktown Parish
- That the Diocese establish processes that guarantee a preferential option for the poor
- Advancing ecumenical relations

### Strengthening faith knowledge

- That courses be run on how to read scripture in public
- Improve standard of liturgies, make them in compliance with liturgical guidelines and make them more attractive to people that are attending and make them more compliant to liturgical experts
- Non-Eucharistic Liturgy - (community needs to know and understand it). Scripture Service (written protocol)
- Reconciliation action plan - across the whole Diocese
- "Newman Society" at JCU, see Stephen Torre
- Using schools on weekends for education purposes (formation) teleconferencing, Skype, webinars
- That the Diocese consider the establishment of a school that is 100% Catholic (staff/students/others)

### Other

- Look at the financial situation - to find a way for more cash flow into the organization (eg McDonald's model)
- Ask for ideas/proposals after the wet season early next year



# SYNOD CONNECTIONS

Newsletter 9, Continued, P4 of 6



## Feedback

Feedback from Synod participants was extremely positive and 70% (52 of the 74 participants) responded. Comments from Feedback Forms included:

*Dialogue excellent*

*A good atmosphere*

*Great occasion for the church to gather with the Bishop*

*A very good day - well organized*

*A fulfilling experience*

*Big appreciation for all the prep. Demanding. I enjoyed being part of the group. It was enlightening and helpful. My BIG HOPE is for IMPLEMENTATION. Best wishes to new exec. Shall pray for you.....that you do your work well!*

*Friday night moved too slowly. Good idea to have as a one day event. Good opportunity for discussion. Process ensured that each participant had a voice and individuals did not dominate.*

*Well done. Not having had any contact with the Synod, apart from the apprehension of coming/attending, I was quietly appreciative of the work and hope for the success of future meetings.*

*More time was available to discuss proposals*

*The Synod has taken on a real direction this time and that's excellent. Vicky's kept it all to a good flow. The idea that the table is the forum was perfect.*

*Thanks for a special blessing and event as a Diocesan Process enrichment.*

*Great chairperson - Vicki Bell*

*Enjoyed - thanks be to God and those who organized it*

*More discussion time*

*It's time well-spent - very good outcomes from one group*

*People are happy - all concluded and new Executive achieved. A successful day*

*A great improvement. Moved along well*

*It seemed to have a very logical sequence, working progressively towards some outcomes and tasks to engage hence forward*

*Seating arrangements gave more time for discussion etc by eliminating movement*

*Segment 2: Reporting to the Synod - was good but would have liked to have had reports from ALL parishes and services*

*Great to have mixed table groups*

*Friday night too much input. Boring*

*An interesting and worthwhile process*

*Wonderful facilitation from Vicki Bell*

*Thanks to all those who contributed to making this a great Synod*

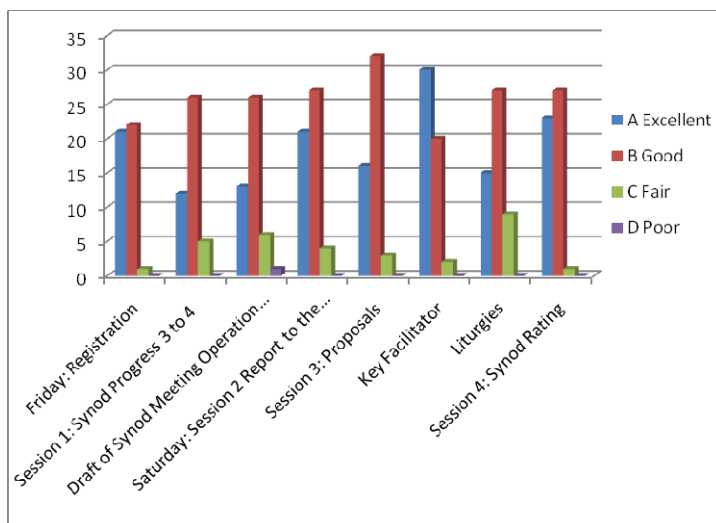
*A fine improvement on last year's. Fine work done in preparation given the low morale from last year*

*Really found it a good experience. Thank you*

*An enthralling experience, one of the best things I've ever done*

*Very worthwhile experience*

*People are leaving with smiles on their faces!*



**Synod Office:**

• **PO Box 625 Cairns QLD 4870**  
• **synod@cairns.catholic.org.au**

• **Ph 4046 5600**

• **www.cairns.catholic.org**

# SYNOD CONNECTIONS



Newsletter 9, Continued, P5 of 6

## Communication

Importantly for all members of the wider diocese, access to all material provided to Synod participants and a detailed account of the Session 4 meeting is **available on the diocesan website at <http://www.cairns.catholic.org.au/SynodSess4.html>**

If you received, via email, the link to this *Synod Connections* newsletter that you are reading now, you will see that you are able to link directly to the reports and proposals from within the newsletter.

If you would like to be **added to the list** of *Synod Connections* recipients, please subscribe by emailing your contact details to [synod@cairns.catholic.org.au](mailto:synod@cairns.catholic.org.au) and type 'Synod Connections - Subscribe' in the subject line. Should you later wish to unsubscribe, simply email again with 'Synod Connections - Unsubscribe' in the subject line.

Ultimately, in the longer term, we are working towards building a **diocesan wide contact list/database** for the distribution of Synod and other diocesan information, and likewise for the reciprocal receipt of information and feedback – to help stay better connected and involved.

Until we reach that goal, the link to *Synod Connections* will be **emailed to contacts on the current Master Diocesan Agencies Contact List**. It will also be emailed to Education's global email list, encompassing **Catholic Education Services staff, school staff, and P & F organisations**.

All agencies, organisations, parishes, religious orders, etc

are asked to **forward the email to their network of members, employees and volunteers**. Schools are asked to forward the email to their **parent database, where one exists**.

Measures are currently being investigated

for next year to help us build a diocesan database including parishioners - to inform and stay in contact with the grass roots of the diocese. If you would like to be involved with assisting in this process, please email Cathy Spencer on [synod@cairns.catholic.org.au](mailto:synod@cairns.catholic.org.au).

**Diocese of Cairns**  
**Catholic Education**  
**Diocese of Cairns**  
*Learning with Faith and Vision*

**KEY to SYMBOLS**

- School
- Mass Centre
- OSHCare Centre
- Kindy
- Trade Training Centre



## Synod Executive

Thanks and acknowledgments are given to the exiting **2010-11** Synod Executive (Cathy Spencer, Fr Greg Moses, Fr Paul Hough, Helga Biro, Jasmin Sheehan, Owen Hitchings, Mark Nucifora, Maureen O'Connor and Sr Irene Harrison) for their commitment, energy and support for the ongoing Synod process.

*(L to R): Cathy Spencer, Maureen O'Connor, Mark Nucifora, Sr Irene Harrison, Owen Hitchings.*



Elections for the **2011-12** Synod Executive were held at Session 4 and congratulations and thanks to the incoming New Executive Fr Greg Moses (Council of Priests); John Shay (Northern Deanery Rep); Maria Caltabiano / Charles Di Bella (Southern Deanery Rep); Joanne Putt (Western Deanery Rep); Sr Irene Masterson (Remote Area Rep); Helga Biro Executive Director Centacare; Jasmin Sheehan Acting Executive Director Finance and Administration and Bill Sultmann Executive Director Catholic Education Services, Cathy Spencer Manager Pastoral Support Services.

*(L to R): Fr Greg Moses, Br Paul Hough (Acting for Bill Sultmann), Cathy Spencer, Jasmin Sheehan, Joanne Putt, Maria Caltabiano, Charles Di Bella, John Shay, Sr Irene Masterson.*

