



Parish Leadership Transition

Update 1: 6-7 April 2019

Our commitment to community

Everyone involved in our Transition Planning is committed to being open and transparent and giving you every opportunity to contribute.

As part of this, we will be sharing regular updates to keep you informed and holding forums to keep you up to date with any developments.

You can share your feedback anytime by:

- talking to a Parish Pastoral Council member
- emailing shparish@sjsh.catholic.edu.au
- calling our parish office on (08) 8346 3901
- dropping a note into our Feedback box at each mass centre

We also plan to create an area of our website where you can view all updates we publish.

Fast facts

- From July we will no longer have an MSC priest leading our Parish community.
- The MSCs will remain, but not in leadership.
- There are different models of how we can be a parish without a resident Parish Priest.
- Other Parishes within the Adelaide Archdiocese are already operating without a resident Parish Priest.
- A sub-group of the Parish Pastoral Council is a Transition Planning Team working closely across our community with the Adelaide Archdiocese to help prepare us for the future.
- We welcome your ideas and feedback anytime.

Parish Transition Planning Meeting

More than 75 parishioners responded to our open invitation to be part of our Transition Planning meeting held on March 2nd.

Across two hours we explored:

- the ways our Parish enriched our lives
- what is important in continuing to be a life-giving community into the future
- the possibilities for the future of the Parish beyond MSC leadership
- the role each of us could individually play in the transition and in our future Parish.

There was a strong sense of belonging across our community, particularly relating to our individual worshipping communities. Parish life enriches all of us in different ways.

While there was much optimism and hope, it was also clear that the prospect of change – and the uncertain nature of it – was also a source of anxiety and concern for many of us.



Fr Bill talked about a new model of leadership where lay and ordained work side by side.

“You, the lay people, have every right to take ownership of your parish and be part of the governance (decision making) of it. You have every right through Baptism to use your gifts in the service of this parish community. Anyone who uses their gifts does so to build up the community, to serve and not be served. This rules out all forms of domination and power (clericalism).

This outlook puts the priest back in the community, not separate from it or superior to it.”

You can read Fr Bill Brady’s full talk further on.

We were also joined by Fr Philip Marshall, Administrator Delegate of the Adelaide Archdiocese.

He explained that while he didn’t know what resources would be available to provide a Parish Priest, other leadership models exist, and the resources of the Office for Renewing Parishes would be available to support our Parish transition.

He explained that as a community of baptised, we need to be such that people look at us and think “that’s’ something I want to be a part of.”

He also offered a fresh perspective on the clergy:

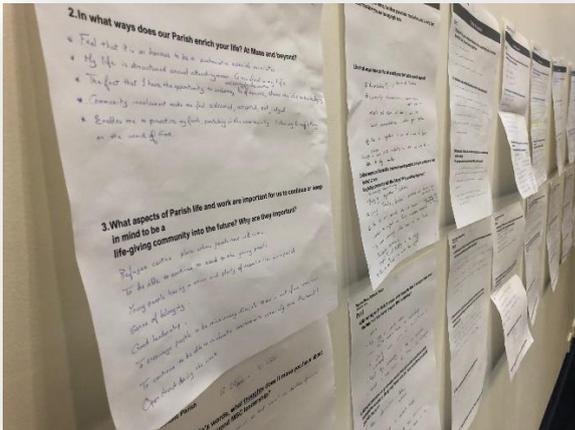
We priests serve you the community. Together we are all instruments of an orchestra, with each of us having a part to play to ensure that all are in tune.... all have a voice.



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Our thanks to everyone who attended as well as those who played a visible role on the day, including Narita, Nat and Mel Perrotta for leading prayer, Mary Hemmings for exploring 'community', Fr Bill and Fr Philip and Tania Cavaiuolo for facilitating the day.



You asked...

We will strive to provide answers as soon as we can. We'll start by answering a key question arising from our Parish Transition Planning Meeting.

Q. Can we be a 'Parish' without a priest?

A. No. We can have an appointed Pastoral Co-Ordinator (such as a Deacon, Pastoral Associate or appropriately qualified lay person) and Moderator (non-resident Parish Priest) who works closely with lay leadership. The Moderator is the link to the Bishop and has overall *pastoral* care of the parish.

In this model, the Pastoral Co-Ordinator and lay leadership are responsible for the *administrative* and *operational* aspects of the Parish. Models like this already exist across the Adelaide Archdiocese.

Our plan is to share possible leadership models with you and invite your input into the model we would like to take our community forward.

(The MSC presence will not be enough to have the required 'responsible authority' to the Archdiocese. We will need an appointed Moderator (non-resident Parish Priest).

Other questions we will answer as soon as we can:

Q. What leadership models are in place in Parishes that do not have a resident Parish Priest?

Q. What structures and skills do we need to successfully transition to lay leadership?

Q. How do we plan to empower members of our community to share more of their gifts and talents?

Q. How are decisions made in Parishes that do not have a resident Parish Priest?

Q. How could I become a female, married deacon?

Q. Who will be our figurehead?

Q. What power would an appointed Moderator (priest) have over a Pastoral Co-Ordinator and lay leadership team?

Our next steps

Stay after Mass on 6&7 April 2019

We encourage you to stay for coffee after 9:30am mass and a shared lunch if you are an 11am Mass-goer.

As a follow up from our recent Parish Meeting, next weekend, 6th/7th April, Parish Pastoral Council members will speak at all Masses about 'Being Community'.

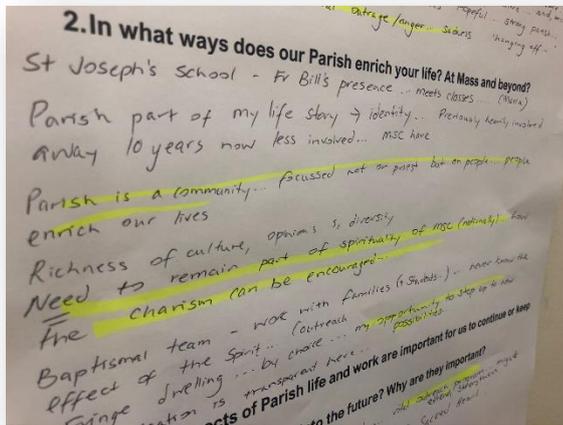
Valuing and strengthening the bonds of community are going to be vital as we move forward as a Parish in these changing times.

We would value as many voices as possible to be included in these conversations – and we'd really like to hear yours. If you can't stay, we will be sharing an update on what was said and we hope you will have your say then.



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The Shift in Theology of Ministry that informs shift in Administration of our Parish

Fr Bill Brady's Talk at Hindmarsh-Findon Parish Transition Meeting 2nd March 2019

We have arrived at a new stage of our parish's history when it will no longer be administered by MSC's but by Diocesan Administration with some MSC presence.

When that handover takes place (June 30th) we wish to be able to present to the Archdiocese of Adelaide what we consider to be the best possible model for us - that is, how we would most like to see ourselves and how we want to operate under new leadership.

It is possible to have more than one model for this and at this stage we are not clear what that model will be - we want you (our parishioners) to help us to discover it.

But whatever we eventually come up with, and the way we determine that, needs to be grounded in a contemporary model of church, that is, a contemporary theology of church and ministry.

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Fr Bill Brady msc

a paradigm shift needs to take place in us as well - in our concept of church and priesthood.

Let's look at the past and see what has changed.

Until Vatican Two 'ministry' was almost exclusively the preserve of the clergy. The laity were largely reduced to a passive role. The manifold duties of running the parish fell largely on the priest.

You might think Vatican Two changed all that. In fact, it didn't but it set the wheels in motion for change.

It continued to reserve the term 'ministry' for bishops, priests and deacons. It emphasised the traditional teaching that priests are 'set apart' by ordination, separate from the community and sole performers of a whole range of sacred duties, particularly the Sacraments.

However, the Council said enough elsewhere which would lead to a new understanding of the dignity and role of all the baptised. This would come from the document on the Church, Lumen Gentium, which gave us a new understanding of how the Church sees itself.

Up until the Vatican Council, the Church as a hierarchy was the dominant model. In other words, the Church was shaped like a pyramid or an army, with chains of command and a structure where the hierarchy had power and the laity had

none. It was authoritarian in its operation.

The major change which would take place at the Council was that this structure was secondary to something else - that the Church was first and foremost a community, a 'communio' as Congan called it, a 'People of God' where everyone was equal because of their Baptism. It moved away from an authoritarian model to a participatory one.

Within this community, gifts were distributed to all to serve and build up the Body of Christ, that is, the Church and the local parish community. Both ordained and non-ordained shared in ministry - it was just that they had a different role. Under this, the laity had a right to be involved in the governance of the Church as we've seen in Diocesan and Parish Councils.



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That understanding of Church as a People of God taking precedence over the hierarchical structure always needs to be upheld or the Church will descend into clericalism.

Clericalism has plagued the Church for centuries, probably going back to Constantine in the 4th Century. It is elitist, it's about power and privilege, it's what has led to abuse. Worse still, it stifles the gifts of the other baptised. It carries the notion that the priest has an exclusive and privileged access to the Divine.

We still have a long way to go to rid the Church of it and it might take some changes in our understanding of Holy Orders to bring this about.

Melbourne priest Eric Hodgens in the 2018 Summer edition of "The Swag" (1) questions where the priest has sacred status over and above laity. "A priest," he says, "is no more sacred than any other baptised Christian." (p 16)

Perhaps the sexual abuse scandal highlights this point. Maybe, too, the sexual abuse scandal will be the very thing that calls us to remedy the problem.

Vincent Long, Bishop of Parramatta, in his excellent address to the priests of New Zealand and Australia in September 2018 makes the point that 'as important as it is to consider the questions of women ordained in ministries of the Church, it is far worse to persist with structures that fail to convey the message of the Gospel.'

He continues, "Adding women into the archaic structures that need fundamental reform may be linked to pouring new wine into old wine skins." (2)

Seeing light at the end of the tunnel he says, "In the end, though, I firmly believe we are on the threshold of renewal and transformation of the priesthood. Like the wedding feast of Cana, the wine of old has served the Church well but it is running out. The old way of being a priest has, likewise, well served the Church we love. But that model of the exalted, separated and elitist priesthood is drawing its last breath – at least in many parts of the world including Australia."

I'd like to add to all this by saying that priesthood needs to be demythologised. We need to get rid of the myth and find what priesthood is about at its core.

Having observed all this, we can see how you, the lay people, have every right to take ownership of your parish and be part of the governance (decision making) of it. That you have every right through Baptism to use your gifts in the service of this parish community. That anyone who uses their gifts does so to build up

the community, to serve and not be served. This rules out all forms of domination and power (clericalism). This outlook puts the priest back in the community, not separate from it or superior to it.

Just as the appointment of new principals to our Catholic Schools (and other executive positions in our schools), with the aid of a panel of judges who do their homework on the candidates and peruse their reports, so it is also possible to envisage the same with the appointment Bishops to Dioceses and priests to parishes. Well informed lay people could be involved in this level of governance.

"As a people who believe and trust in the love of God for us, revealed in the heart of Christ, we live out this love in a welcoming and inclusive community that provides life-giving support and service to all people".

Parish Vision Statement

(1) 'The Swag' Vol 26 no 4 Summer 2019

(2) Bishop Vincent Long's address to bishops in Australia and NZ: <https://catholicoutlook.org/bishop-vincents-address-to-priests-in-australia-and-new-zealand/>