

A PROCESS OF RENEWAL IN THE DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

Foreword

The Diocese of Maitland was established in 1847. For at least one hundred and twenty of those years people were confident they understood what it meant to be a Catholic and felt their salvation rested in doing what the church told them.

Today we are attempting to understand a new way of being church. The Bishop, his fellow clergy and lay leaders are charged with working together with the People of God to become the face of God as revealed by Jesus Christ in today's world. Together we strive to show our community what it means to be the Body of Christ and individually to make real the presence of God in our everyday encounters in whatever ministry we find ourselves.

In 1988, the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle embarked upon a journey to formally embrace the Spirit and Teachings of Vatican II and to launch a Diocesan Pastoral Planning process that would irrevocably link pastoral planning in the diocese to the theological principles of Vatican II. This was to take place against the background of the Diocesan Synod of 1992-93.

Pastoral Planning is a tool used by the Bishop and the Diocesan Pastoral Council, to involve the diocese in a process of evaluation, imagining and planning to help the community stay in touch with the changing circumstances of life and faith. In this way the mission of Christ entrusted to the people is constantly reviewed and re-visioned and its life and faith remain refreshing, enlivening and prophetic. Pastoral Planning is essential for the ongoing life and vitality of the church.

In 2001 Pope John Paul II wrote about the processes of Pastoral Planning:

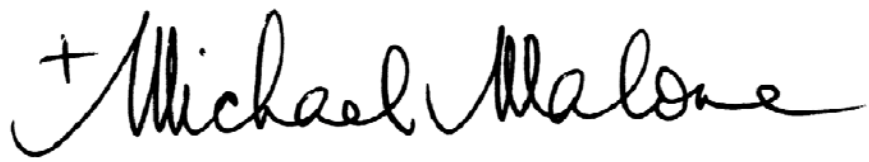
"Let us have no illusion, unless we follow the spiritual path of a spirituality of communion, external structures of communion will serve very little purpose. They would become mechanisms without a soul "masks" of communion rather than its means of expression and growth. The spirituality of Communion supplies institutional reality with a soul."

(Novo Millennio Ineunte (43) 2001)

Moving Forward Together is the latest interpretation of our Diocesan Pastoral Plan. The 1992/93 Diocesan Synod and subsequent Diocesan Assemblies have set the mission and structures for pastoral planning across the diocese. This version of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan incorporates a planning framework to assist



parishes, the chancery and agencies to plan for both the short and long-term. It is hoped that this tool will support those involved in planning at their local level.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ Michael Malone". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross symbol at the beginning.

Bishop Michael and the Diocesan Stewardship Committee