

Blackbutt Pastoral Region

Cardiff, Kotara South, Adamstown, New Lambton, Lambton and Waratah Parishes

Regional Assembly Report

Preamble

This is your *Regional Report*, promised by Bishop Michael Malone at your Regional Assembly. We hope it is of assistance to you, as you continue to engage in the process of responding to the regional issues raised at your Assembly.

A good place to begin may be to recall the aims of the round of Regional Assemblies:

1. To provide an opportunity which invited the participation of a wider cross section of people, particularly of young adults;
2. To engage people with stimulus material that would help them develop their understanding of:
 - the influences which have shaped the Church as we experience it today
 - the culture in which we live
 - the type of Church we are called to be
 - what it means to be involved in the evangelising mission of Jesus and his Church in the 21st century;
 - what is needed to be effective followers of Jesus in today's culture.
3. To provide an opportunity for participants to discuss key issues in the light of this stimulus material.

The following questions, which emerge from Fr. Richard's presentation, are offered to help you continue to explore your Regional issues in the light of his input.

1. What is the heart or essence of this issue?
2. What about this issue is Good News or has the potential to bring Good News?
3. What about this issue contains obstacles or blocks to the Good News, both for the faith community and the society beyond it?
4. Where or how in this issue, is the Spirit calling you into the Paschal Mystery; into the journey from death to new life?
5. What resources do you have to help you respond to this issue in a way that takes you forward into a fuller living of the life of Christ?
6. Amongst the options you are considering as your response to this issue, what would you consider to be -
 - healthy or unhealthy responses (does it blame; does it deny the existing reality)?
 - responses focused on mission or survival?
 - responses emerging from a catholic (both/and) mindset as opposed to an either/or mindset?
 - responses that will take your community of faith forward?
7. Where and how does your response fit with the 15 principles and tasks outlined in Fr. Richard's sheet 'Shaping the Church's Future'?
8. Will your response spark and energise people's life, passion, commitment and hope?

With every Best Wish,
The Diocesan Assembly Standing Committee.

Regional Issues	Shared Issues (Region and Diocese)	Diocesan Issues	Universal Church Issues
<p>1. The reality of how we live as a Christian Community. Dimensions of this issue included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy for Sacraments of Initiation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concerns about baptising children from families with ‘notional Catholicism’. - Issues of invitation, welcome and conversion: we need to find a new way of inviting and welcoming which may lead to faith filled celebrations of baptism. • The tension of different opinions e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Over the focus on youth: some are sick of hearing about it, others are passionate about it and some groups feel they are left out e.g. the middle aged and their concerns. - Priest and people’s different perceptions of Church; the fostering of lay involvement or the lack of it. The inconsistency re this across the region. - Our different liturgical understandings, styles and needs coming together in the Sunday celebration of Eucharist. • Need to better meet people’s needs (as other Church’s do) so they can participate more fully e.g. child caring facilities. • Our response to dissent and disagreement in the community. • The need for this type of gathering more regularly, perhaps annually. • How we negotiate change as a community. 			
<p>2. Regional Pastoral Planning. Dimensions of this issue included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about regional development being at the expense of the parish community • The need for services to be where people are. • Concern for what will happen to Church buildings as we move towards more centralised Mass centres. • Urging to look to the lay people to maintain the services provided by the local community. • 			

3. The difference in our understandings of Eucharist.

Some comments which may help your reflection ...

There are multiple resources available throughout the Diocese to support regions in responding to this issue.

- TWEC – contact Sr. Colleen Carney on 49307431
- Beginning Theology programme – contact Christine Cavenagh on 49791186
- Faith Development Commission can be contacted through Dianne Lantry – Commissions Support Officer on 49791156

4. Our need for ongoing faith formation, especially concerning our understanding of the Priesthood of the Faithful

- Need to hear what we heard from Fr. Richard in homilies at Mass.

5. Our concern about youth and their absence from our parish communities.

- As indicated in the first issue, youth presents in the data as a tension. Some are strong in their need to address the issue, while others are tired of hearing about it and concerned for the lack of focus on the young and middle aged adults who are in the community.

6. Where to from here?

- This has been a good step in the process.

7. The Church needs to make more use of the media and other forms of modern technology.