

Northern Pastoral Region

Taree, Wingham, Forster/Tuncurry, Krumbach and Gloucester Parishes

Regional Assembly Report - Issues Raised

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 (As per discussion areas)	Shared Issues (Region and Diocese)	Diocesan Issues	Universal Church Issues
<p>1. Ongoing Development of the Northern Pastoral Region.</p> <p>Dimensions of this issue included -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two alternate regional structures discussed – the one contained in <i>New Wine</i> and another. • Concern for priests travelling long distances. • Identity of communities is strong. 			
<p>2. Liturgy</p> <p>Dimensions of this issue included -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impetus to share ideas across parishes • Question of access to sacraments with fewer priests • Eucharist continued to surface as the issue <p>Some comments which may help your reflection ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diocesan Support will be available for negotiating the implementation of <i>Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest</i> as appropriate to Regional needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Sunday Celebrations in Anticipation of Eucharist</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How might the region negotiate this issue in a co-ordinated manner? 		
<p>3. Evangelisation</p> <p>Dimensions of this issue included -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we expand the Church and reach out to those not currently participating in the community? • Need for the church to be seen in the community – by its deeds and example. 			
<p>4. Church Past, Present, Future.</p> <p>Dimensions of this issue included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to recognise the contribution of women. • Need to provide opportunities for all. • Need to broaden Church focus beyond Mass attendance. • Faith formation initiatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some frustration with current structures. • Availability of priests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Concern expressed regarding people who are not so familiar with the present day realities of the Church, and place expectations on priests which they are unable to meet. (e.g. phone calls to be with the sick NOW.) • Need to shift focus from a ‘shortage of priests’ where the emphasis is on the need to ‘get more priests’, to the need for all to fulfil their baptismal commitment to the life and mission of the Church. 		

- Concern about our ability to pay a just wage to lay people and how this impacts on the necessary development of lay ministry.