

Special Issues Sub-Committee

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Bishop Mulkearns, reported for this

Committee. 29 PROTOCOL

MOTION: _____ That the Conference accept in principle the strategy outlined in this Protocol so that the Protocol be accepted on a trial basis for a period of twelve months.

CARRIED

30 BROTHER PAUL NOONAN

The Committee advised that Brother Paul Noonan, Provincial Superior of the Saint Patrick's Province of the Christian Brothers, has been appointed successor to Brother Frank Chappell on the Special Issues Committee.

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP PANEL

Bishop Dougherty, Convenor of the panel, delivered this report which the Meeting received.

31 PROPOSED DISCUSSION AT DECEMBER 1990
CONFERENCE MEETING

As the term of all Committee and Conference-Delegate positions (except the Central Commission) finishes in May 1991, the Panel considered that a preliminary discussion of "*the Committee situation generally*", would appropriately take place at the December 1990 Meeting of Conference.

MOTION: _____ That a minimum of one hour be allotted to this discussion as an agenda item at the December 1990 Meeting of Conference.

CARRIED

The Panel envisioned that, after consultation with Conn bishops, it would prepare a "*position paper*" for such disci

The Panel **invited** suggestions, as regards the format for 1991 - May 1994). These may be "*viva voce*" or in writ! the Panel (Bishops Mulkearns, Cuskelly, Dougherty), either during the current Meeting of Conference or within the forthcoming few months.

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CATHOLIC INSTITUTE FOR MINISTRY

PURPOSE:

The Catholic Institute for Ministry was officially constituted on July 1st, 1989, and is subject to review after three years. It is a subsidiary organisation of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

Its purpose is to expand the educational and support services offered by the former Centre For Human Development and extend them to all dioceses in Australia. In this work the Institute is related to the St Peter Renewal Centre and is to pursue closer links with that Centre.

While being open to all who are involved in ministry, the Institute has a particular concern for the nation's ordained priests and religious.

Therefore the Institute will aim to:

- research the pastoral and personal needs of those in ministry, especially of priests and religious, and seek to develop an awareness of such needs,
- identify, develop and make available appropriate strategies and resources to respond to identified needs.
- appropriately adapt the Ministry to Priests and Ministry to Religious Programs, and introduce them to dioceses and congregations when requested.
- sponsor regular national and regional meetings of directors of ongoing education and formation.
- continue to work to develop the structure of peer ministry and ministry support groups.
- establish links of co-operation with other national and international bodies working in renewal.
- undertake visitation to superiors and directors of ongoing education and formation.
- circulate a regular bulletin
- provide a service for consultation

GOVERNANCE:

The Catholic Institute for Ministry is ultimately responsible to the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference through its Committee for Clergy and Religious. It will operate within the guidelines of the proposal accepted by the Bishops Conference of April 1989. and annual reports on its operation and finances will be submitted.

Its immediate operation will be managed by a Board of Directors which will be directly responsible for implementing overall policy. It will also attend to the provision of adequate finance and to the appointment of personnel.

The immediate operation of the Institute will be the responsibility of an Executive Director who will be nominated by the Board for appointment by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

The initial appointment for the Board and the Executive Director will be for three years or until the proposed amalgamation with St Peter Renewal Centre, or other appropriate body, takes place, whichever comes first.

FINANCE

Funds to finance the Institute will be partly generated from payment for services rendered and supplemented by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference according to an annual budget submitted for approval by the Conference.

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(APPENDIX T)PRESS STATEMENTON THE UNITED NATIONS'CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The Australian Catholic Bishops give their wholehearted support to recent international initiatives to overcome abuse of the rights of children, including cruelty to and even torture of children, child poverty and the forced separation of families, especially refugee families.

The Bishops welcome the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child and sincerely hope that, despite any limitations it may have, it will prove to be an effective instrument for protecting the rights and interests of all children throughout the world.

Because of the importance of the Convention for the children of the whole world, the Bishops strongly recommend that Australia should ratify the Convention, though they must at the same time express some reservations concerning the possible implementation and use of the Convention within Australia itself.

The Bishops are aware that the Preamble to the Convention provides for the rights of children before as well as after birth, and are particularly concerned that human beings from their beginning and throughout their lives be given the protection of the law. In the event of ratification, the Australian Government will have a moral obligation to ensure that the law prohibits harmful interference with human beings at all stages of life.

The Bishops are also anxious that ratification should leave no doubt that parents have the primary right and responsibility for the nurturing of their children. The Convention must not be used to undermine the legitimate authority of parents, and the role of parents should not be set aside unless the parents are manifestly abusing their authority or otherwise neglecting their obligations. The Bishops endorse the concern of the Holy See's Observer to the United Nations in relation to the rights of parents to ensure the religious education of their children in accordance with the parents' own convictions.

Within Australia itself there are many issues concerning children that require urgent attention, e.g. poor health and education levels among many Aboriginal children; high rates of child detention; physical and sexual abuse of children; child homelessness; drug abuse. Unless ratification of the Convention is to be nothing more than an empty gesture, concerted action will be called for from the Federal Government, each and every State and Territorial Government, the Churches and the entire Australian community.

Plenary Minutes May 1990