

Charge to Synod

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Presidential Address to the Third Session of the 49th Synod

Saturday, October 23, 2010
Newcastle Conservatorium of Music

Welcome

I greet you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ whose grace sustains us all as a Church and in faithful discipleship.

Synod is vital for our Church for we are episcopally led and synodically governed. In this gathering that has already committed itself at the Synod Eucharist to the gracious oversight of God to inspire us and to protect us from error and disobedience, we seek to discern together the mind of Christ as we face the decisions required of us in judicious and faithful government.

I thank at the outset of this Synod those whose work has enabled us to come prepared for this third and final session of the Forty-ninth Synod of the Diocese of Newcastle. In particular, I thank the Diocesan Business Manager and Ms Lisa Cater of Parish Services.

I also thank the Dean and his staff for the Synod Eucharist in the Cathedral. I know from conversations how inspiring it is for so many from across the Diocese to worship in the Cathedral and to receive the Cathedral's ministry.

I welcome to their first synod in this Diocese the Reverends Joshua Bovis, Jessica Grant, Richard Harvey, Richard Loh, and Charlie Murry.

I give thanks to God for the faithful service within the Diocese of these clergy who have retired since the last session of Synod:

The Reverend Janise Deaves, Callaghan Ministry Team Community Chaplain – entered Diocese 6 November 2002. Retired 22 November 2009. (7 years)

The Reverend Ann Watson, Rector Toukley-Budgewoi – entered Diocese 2 February 2000. Retired 3 February 2010. (10 years)

The Reverend Margaret Carr, Diocesan Director of Ordinands – entered Diocese 10 May 1992. Retired 14 March 2010. (18 years)

The Reverend Gary Harman, Rector Singleton – entered Diocese 2 February 1991. Retired 23 March 2010. (19 years)

The Reverend Paul Robertson, Rector New Lambton – entered Diocese 15 December 1973. Retired 21 April 2010. (37 years)

The Reverend Rosemary Gillham, Rector Wyoming – entered Diocese 2 February 1998. Retired 13 June 2010. (12 years)

The Reverend Valerie McDonald, Assistant Priest Gosford – entered Diocese 28 June 2003. Retired 30 June 2010. (7 years)

The Reverend Beatrice Pate, Rector Raymond Terrace – entered Diocese 6 February 1988. Retired 3 July 2010. (22 years)

I want to take as an overarching theme for this address to Synod, the clash of cultures in which we are immersed as a church and which we are experiencing internally. I want to indicate that such an experience of a clash of cultures is not novel but indeed has been the Church's context for its mission from the Church's inception. I want to indicate ways in which Holy Scripture helps us to respond to this clash of cultures both externally in our missional context and internally as we seek to develop and embrace missional structures and behaviours.

Biblical Scholarship – a Major Asset for the Missional Church

One of the great assets available to the Church now is the vast amount of Biblical scholarship. The last fifty years or so have seen an industry of biblical scholarship that has made available to thoughtful Christians insights into and knowledge of the contexts and circumstances in which books of the Bible were written and edited. Such knowledge has provided us with resources for understanding the contest of ideas that shaped the emergence of all of Scripture both within the Hebrew Bible and within the New Testament.

It is important to note the phrase 'contest of ideas'. I want to apply this to the emergence of the New Testament Scriptures in particular. It is clear from careful reading of the gospels that the writers of each of the gospels structures his gospel to frame the ministry and teaching of Jesus within the conflicts that Jesus generated. In such framing, each gospel writer addresses the extant controversies swirling around their Christian communities.

For instance, in the Gospel of Matthew there is repeated reference to 'the Jews' and to 'their synagogues'.¹ Such references are contrasts with Matthew's own community, itself Jewish in origin and possibly at the time of his writing relatively indistinguishable from other Jewish expressions in synagogues.

Sandra Schneiders, a significant New Testament scholar, has suggested that the two great conversations in chapters three and four of the Gospel of John are actually conversations between the Christian community and Judaism (the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in chapter 3) and the Samaritan religion (the conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well in chapter 4).² I cannot here develop Schneider's argument that I have found persuasive but I want to use her suggestion to further the point that Biblical scholarship is helping us to notice first of all and then to appreciate that the mission of the church of the very first decades was within adversarial social and intellectual environments – the early church was in a contest of ideas within the public domain. The public domain varied from synagogue to agora (market-place/city centre) depending upon the location of the church's mission and its proponents, Peter or Paul.

I think it is vital for us to recognize that the origins of the New Testament, including the gospels, lie in contested public space. We too experience contested public space as in a political election campaign, or more recently for the Church in the increasingly strident attacks upon the credibility of Christian faith from international high profile atheists.

Mostly within Australia, the Church has encountered indifference at worst and polite acknowledgement at best. We have not in Australia as yet had orchestrated advertising campaigns designed to discredit Christian Faith as has been the experience in London, with London buses carrying advertisements stating that life can be fully enjoyed without any reference to God. The

¹ See for instance Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 10:37.

² Sandra Schneiders.1991. The Revelatory Text. San Francisco: Harpers, pp.180-197.

benign indifference characteristic of Australians towards religion in general has not generated sufficient energy or financial backing to orchestrate such a disputatious media campaign.

The fact that the origin of our sacred texts was a publicly contested intellectual environment should suggest to us that such contesting is very likely to continue, especially in a time of cultural transition as is the situation for us in the Western World and therefore in Australia. We are the product both in origin as a Faith and as a Church of such a clash of ideas. The clashing of ideas and the cultures supported by those ideas is evident in the New Testament, markedly so in the Letters of the Apostles. Our formation as a church in England through that tumultuous period from King Henry VIII through to James I is equally the outcome of some ideas being victorious and other ideas (allegiance to the Pope) being abandoned.

The contest of ideas about God, God's purposes, about the nature and mission of Jesus, about the structure of Christian communities, about the behaviour and life-style of Christians was heightened and given increasing significance by the eschatological tension that overarches the entire New Testament. There are places where this eschatological tension and expectation breaks through as in Saint Paul's correspondence with the church at Thessalonica³ and with the evident distress of Thessalonian Christians whose loved ones had already died at the time of Saint Paul's writing.⁴

It seems to me that the apostles as the leaders of the fledgling churches and the gospel writers as the theologians of their churches had to deal with the cultural turbulence of their own days by ensuring that their versions of the story of the ministry and life of Jesus addressed the issues that were being thrown up in the public sphere by alternative competitive ideas and that further, the teaching that they were promoting was grounded in a sustainable culture that demarcated Christians.

The ideas that the gospel announced as 'good news' were quite revolutionary ideas and critical of the current culture. The very title 'Lord' when applied to Jesus was a categorical renunciation of the claimed Lordship of the Roman Emperor and thus a dissident act.

We swagger around with Christian language without realizing the initial costliness of using words and titles with which we are too familiar but which put the first Christians at risk of their liberty and even of their lives. The long quietude of indifference towards the Church by Australian society has numbed us to the recognition that the New Testament has within it the tensions of massive cultural changes and the pain of contested ideas. Even the contested ideas created heat and divisions that scorched the early church.

The churches that we meet through the gospels and the apostolic letters had to negotiate great cultural changes, endure turbulence, live with uncertainty, integrate new learning, contest ideas, deal with stress and division, be intentional within all of that and hold fast to the vision given by the founding figure and often reiterated by that founding figure.

Let me offer a short case study from Saint Paul's ministry with the churches in Galatia. The reference is to Galatians chapter 3, verses 27-28:

Baptized into union with him, you have all put on Christ like a garment. There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and freeman, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus.

³ See 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11 and 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5.

⁴ See 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18.

John Fenton comments on this passage

[Saint Paul says that] baptism abolishes divisions, it does not create them...the most relevant division for the Galatians was that between 'Jews' and the rest of humanity ('Greeks'). The Galatians thought that this was still a valid distinction but Paul does not. 'Slave' and 'free' was also an obvious distinction in a society that depended on slavery for its functioning. In the Christian congregation, however, you could not tell who was which: the Spirit did not observe society's rules. "male' and 'female', Paul says, is a third distinction that has been abolished. In their relationship with Christ they are equal, and each of them is an equally important member of the body of Christ. (Paul himself found it difficult to put the second and third of these abolitions into practice –neither slave nor free, male nor female- and so have his successors.)⁵

The amount of energy and advocacy that Saint Paul had to put into ensuring that the Galatian Christians, mostly Gentiles, did not succumb to the arguments to embrace Judaism as a prerequisite of their faithful believing in Jesus most likely did not give him the time to ensure that the other divisions that are castigated by baptism did not gain both credence and practice.

Do we not ourselves recognize how much of our time and energy is siphoned off from our major task of mission by other tasks that are urgent but not as important? These tasks, and I have experienced them in significant volume this past year, deflect us from our primary purposes. This deflection and thus delay are features of the Church's life and mission throughout its entire history.

This Diocese has attended to baptism's overcoming of inherent divisions. Women can be ordained to each of the three orders of ministry for this Diocese. And it is obvious as you look around this Synod that women play an equally prominent role in the important decision-making of this Synod.

However, within parts of the Church, and even in Australia, there is a recognized retreat from such inclusion. This detected movement is symptomatic that new cultures take a long time to become the established culture and that under stress and pressure (as the Church presently is) regression to former cultures and behaviours is possible.

The Clash of Cultures as our Setting for Mission

The Letter to the Galatians is a classic example of the clash of cultures, even within a new church. The ideas of Saint Paul compete with the ideas of more conservative believers, most likely influenced by the Church in Jerusalem. I imagine that you can notice resonances from the Galatian situation with circumstances within this Diocese and even more widely within the Anglican Communion. My point is that the clash of cultures is not novel or unusual but still daunting and demanding both of our attention and our energy, as well as our capacity to advocate for the understandings that support the new culture.

The ecclesiological clash of cultures is the transition made necessary and urgent by the transitions in Australian (and Western) culture. The Church is moving out of a settled pastoral culture that presupposed general acceptance of the Church and high respectful regard for the Church into a culture that is essentially missional in which the church has to gain its credentials and earn trust.

⁵ John Fenton. 2007. *Galatians and 1 & 2 Thessalonians – Daily Bible Commentary*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, pp.64 & 65.

In his most recent book English priest and writer Alan Billings notes

The Christian Church does not exist in a vacuum. Throughout its long history it has been affected by changes in society and culture that often lay beyond its capacity to influence. This has certainly been more the case in recent centuries as the Age of Christendom – when the Church could profoundly influence culture and society- has come to an end. But the Church has also changed as a result of its own reflection. The two are not unconnected: it is often a shift in the culture more generally that led the Church, or forced the Church, to reflect further on its life and mission.⁶

This further reflection which I have undertaken in each of the Synod Addresses and encouraged the Diocese to pursue in the variety of contexts that are the mission settings for the Diocese is an exciting undertaking; it is not gloomy or dispiriting. The reason that I have been excited by such an extensive undertaking of reflecting on the Church's life and mission is that we are connected with what Saint Paul was doing for the Church in Galatia (modern-day Turkey).

Further as Dr. Andrew Davison has indicated 'there has been within twentieth-century theology what [he] would like to call a 'Return to the Church'. Davison writes

If we could appreciate this, and catch something of the vitality of these ideas, it would go some way towards raising our mood and restoring our confidence.⁷

Davison succinctly remarks, 'we need more theology in our Church and more church in our theology.'⁸ This remark encapsulates essentials of the direction in which I have sought to lead the Diocese.

Since John A.T. Robinson's study The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology⁹ in which he noted that 'the concept of the body forms the keystone of Paul's theology'¹⁰ there is a recovered understanding that salvation is communal and ecclesial rather than just individual. Increasingly there is within the Church a growing awareness of our interdependence forged through baptism that brings us into vibrant purposeful relationship with one another. We really are ligaments connected with one another either working harmoniously to achieve the purpose of the Church or disabling the Church through our own atrophy.

This interdependence that is shaped for mission, for acting as the body of Christ (the distinctly Pauline description of the Church), means that congregations cannot ever be companies of strangers meeting conveniently together just for their own spiritual gratification. This does yet again demand a change of culture especially from the dominance of consumerism that has deeply and badly infected some expressions of Church and inverted the purpose of worship from adoration of God to the soothing of agitated human beings, as if worship were an ecclesial prescription for valium.

The cultural clash for an identity of Church that is coherent with the New Testament teaching about the nature and purpose of the Church is captured in the aphorism *not going to church but being the church*. This pithy aphorism moves us from thinking of the church as a functional

⁶ Alan Billings. 2010. Making GOD Possible. London: SPCK, p. 32.

⁷ Andrew Davison, Theology and the Renewal of the Church in Mark Chapman. (Ed). 2010. The Hope of Things to Come. London: Mowbray, p. 72.

⁸ op.cit, p.69.

⁹ John A.T. Robinson. 1952. The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology. London: SCM.

¹⁰ op. cit. 1952. p.9.

commodity to appreciating that the church is constructed mystically (that is through God's action) of all those who live their baptized lives faithfully.

The Church has an ontology as well as a Divine purpose or function but its identity is more its ontology than its function. Although if its ontology is misunderstood its function will consequently be impaired in that it will be more shaped by what we want from it than what God purposes for it.

I am connecting our current situation of experiencing a clash of cultures, of feeling the impact of competing ideas, of being disturbed when we want to be restful with the condition of the churches that the apostles founded and nurtured. The long quiescence of the Western Church until about 1963 is still requiring us to rub that sleep out of our eyes so that we can clearly see the purpose for which God constituted the Church – to show Christ now so that people can see for themselves what the life of reconciliation with God and with one another is really like. In other words, the Church previews the full Reign of God that Jesus initiated and that lies completely at the Eschaton, the Last Days.

This is a high view of the Church, the proper use of the description High Church. The Church serves God's missional purposes and in so doing continues the ministry of Jesus that deals effectively and economically with the perplexing human condition in all its variations. The ministry of Jesus was itself an instance of competing ideas in the public arena.

The conflicts that surrounded Jesus in his ministry and that escalated into his arrest and execution were essentially competing religious ideas. The conflicts were strong for Jesus challenged foundational religious ideas upon which serious men had developed their understanding of God (their theology), their understanding of themselves and their daily practices. The outcomes were important and the stakes were high –hence, the ultimate costliness to Jesus.

The Competing Ideas that Affect the Church's Mission

I turn now to look at the competing ideas in the external environment for the Church and later I will enumerate cultural aspects of a missional Church.

Like many clergy I scour book reviews to learn the directions of current theological and ecclesiological thinking. This past year I have read with appreciation the writing of Alan Billings, whom I quoted earlier, a thoughtful priest of the Church of England who has also been a lecturer in religious studies. The title of his latest book, Making GOD possible – the task of ordained ministry present and future grabbed my attention. Billings with whom I have now corresponded is writing out of the English situation. However, that situation is close to the culture of Australia – in fact, the situation of the Church of England might be somewhat brighter than the context for the Anglican Church of Australia.

In a summary of issues facing the Church of England and thus the ministry of ordained ministers, Billings writes

...during the course of the twentieth century, while the majority of people ceased to find religion of any interest, there developed in Britain a free market in religion and spirituality. There was no longer any compulsion –either legal or social- for anyone to attend church. People were free to be religious or not and to be religious in whatever way they chose, and most chose not to be religious at all. Moreover, each individual became the authority in religious matters, for only each individual knew what satisfied him or her spiritually. Everyone felt free to asset-strip any of the great religious traditions and take

from them whatever pleased or whatever seemed to help. In such a culture, the last remaining privileges of the Church simply looked out of place –either harmlessly or offensively so- and slowly had to give way.¹¹

Billings offers helpful perspectives in his phrases ‘free market in religion and spirituality’ and ‘everyone felt free to asset-strip the great religious traditions’. This is the external and even to an extent the internal situation of the churches. There is significant interest in the primitive pervasive sense that there is more to being human than just flesh and blood. The inchoate sense of transcendence that breaks in upon people through natural wonders or music or art or architecture or momentous human life events creates a longing for coherence, for meaning that is spiritual in nature.

The responses that are made to this spiritual disturbance are hugely varied from new age spiritualities to the embrace of meditative forms of Buddhism. The important recognition for the Church is first this yearning that initially has no developed vocabulary and seeks explanation, and second that there are whole religious shopping centres out there offering interpretations and resources.

We have encountered over the last decades a flaccid form of indifference to religion and a growing dichotomy between religion and spirituality. Sadly, many non-church people think that if they are to develop their spirituality they must seek an Eastern expression for this, unaware of the great traditions and resources of spirituality within the Church. Perhaps, we have hidden our treasures of spirituality in the fields of institutionalism, or worse we have failed to practise them sufficiently and consequently, their visibility is obscured.

I think that unless indifference is recognized and challenged, and that will require considerable intellectual effort from us, indifference will eventually lead to unbelief. The Church in England is feeling the impact of the new atheism promoted so vigorously by Richard Dawkins and others. The new atheism will impact us too and may be fuelled here by resistance to and rejection of fundamentalism and aggressive evangelicalism.

The issue for parishes is whether or not parishioners are being offered resources to rebut the new atheism that is so strident and potentially intimidating, especially if they feel theologically inadequate. The Diocese is offering a major equipping resource through the Newcastle School of Theology for Ministry. I refer you to the NSTM Report on page 83 of the Synod Book.

The NSTM offers not only theological formation but it does so more widely than some degree institutions do. Further, the Ministry Streams offered on three Saturdays of the year provide skill formation that assists reticent Anglicans to become more confident in sharing the Christian Faith.

I think the Newcastle School of Theology for Ministry is a successful shift in our culture. Large numbers of Anglicans throughout the entire Diocese, provided that their clergy have been supportive, have engaged in rigorous theological formation – a possibility not available to them as widely as it now is until 2007. The other exciting aspect of this cultural shift of embracing at the grass-roots serious theological equipping is the progression of graduates from the NSTM programmes into tertiary theological study at the University of Newcastle.

I understand that three of our Priests in Local Ministry will be undertaking the Master of Theology programme at the University of Newcastle in 2011. This cultural shift that is rippling

¹¹ Alan Billings. 2010. p. 27.

across the Diocese should be celebrated for the theological equipping of Anglicans at the local coal-faces of mission is vital and exciting.

I think we have reached the position now when we could legitimately expect members of our Boards and certainly members of Diocesan Council to undertake the Bishop's Certificate in Theology for Ministry so that the decision-making of Diocesan instrumentalities is within a theological as much as a functional perspective.

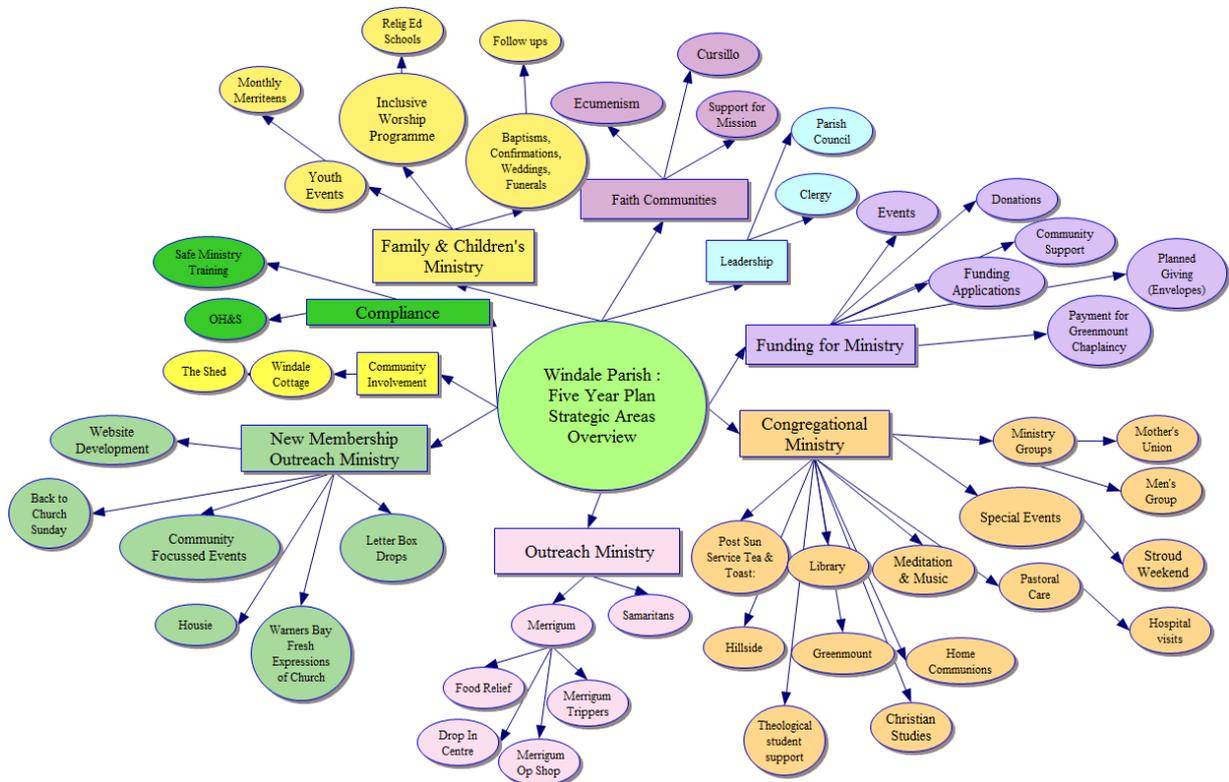
Learning to be a Missional Church

The Diocesan Strategic Plan that was adopted by the last session of Synod offers a template to each parish for its planning for its own mission and for reviewing what it is doing. Both Bishop Peter and I have spent considerable time this year working with parish councils in listening to the implementation of the Diocesan Strategic Plan in parish contexts and in advocating the need for strategy, intentionality and a clear engaging vision. We have visited parishes twice to undertake this work.

I have been very encouraged by the receptivity to our visits and our work with parish councils. At the risk of failing to honour everyone's work, I want to hold up to the Synod the work of three particular parish councils that gave me a real sense of hope. These councils are from our smaller parishes.

The parish council of Windale presented to me probably the most professional engagement with the Diocesan Strategic Plan that I had been given. The plan categorized ministry and outreach that was already occurring and projected opportunities that they could reasonably undertake. In such planning for missional opportunities the context has to be understood, the available personnel carefully researched and there must be clarity about what is to be achieved through the initiative. Further, there has to be planning for the necessary follow-up and the integration into parish life.

You will detect from the schematic diagram of mission that the parish of Windale is being intentional, strategic and visionary. The parish has even developed a rap song about the six 'e's of the Diocesan strategic Plan that helps people remember the six components of the Diocesan Strategic Plan.



The parish council of Swansea has enthusiastically embraced its component of the strategic plan for the Central Coast parishes. When I met with the parish council to obtain its endorsement of the parts of the strategic plan that affected the parish of Swansea I was very impressed by their sense of mission, by their willingness to take (under God) risks for mission, and their generosity of spirit as well as their plain common sense.

The parish council of Toukley has been far-sighted in making financial provision for the development of a church plant in the Lake Munmorah area. The parish of Toukley has been committed to developing outreach in that northern part of its parish and has committed to an alliance with Lakes Anglican parish to ensure its achievement.

The Strategic Plan for the Central Coast

The strategic plan for the Central Coast region involves the development of a church plant in the Lake Munmorah area that will be based on the present Gwandalan congregation becoming the seeding congregation, worship in the Donaldson area and a church-planter who will be working 0.5 in the Lake Munmorah region and 0.5 as an assistant in Lakes Anglican parish.

This entire outreach is enabled by the generosity of Toukley parish in co-operation with Lakes Anglican and Swansea parishes. We ought to congratulate these parishes for their generous missional thinking and celebrate this outcome.

Further, Swansea parish council agreed to working with a 0.5 intentional interim priest for two years on a series of agreed initiative's that are intended to grow the congregation and to embed the parish deeply within its local community. At the end of the day with whatever eventuates no one will be able to accuse Windale, Swansea, Toukley and Lakes of not being prepared to 'have a

go'. I think that as a Synod we ought to be greatly encouraged by the missional thinking of these parishes.

The Central Coast Regional Strategic plan that has been progressed consultatively by Archdeacon Copeman envisages five corporate sized parishes along the railway line. These parishes are: Woy Woy, Gosford, Wyoming, Lakes Anglican and Wyong. Growing to a corporate size parish with 300 or more regular Sunday attendance requires changed internal structures and different styles of leadership from that exercised within smaller congregations.

We plan to offer workshops in early 2011 to those parishes that decide to pursue such congregational growth. Such parishes will include parishes outside of the Central Coast region that are potential corporate sized parishes. We will be drawing on the research of the Alban Institute and the advice given to us by Alice Mann when she was with us earlier this year at the Diocesan Leaders Conference and the Diocesan Convention.

The Central Coast Regional Strategic Plan includes strategies for mission for the development of the Coastal parishes of Bateau Bay (with The Entrance), Kincumber, Terrigal, Toukley-Budgewoi as well as recommendations for the growth of a congregation from within Lakes Grammar and the growth of the congregation at St. Alban's.

The New England Highway Parishes

Another significant growth corridor within the Diocese lies along the New England Highway in the Maitland region. I arranged through the Archdeacon of Newcastle for the clergy concerned to join me on a mini-bus tour of these new housing estates and to reflect with me the best ways that we could undertake ministry to these large housing estates that are unconnected with our present parish plants.

The visuals of these estates and their locations tell the story of the issues before us as indeed we experienced first-hand on the tour that we undertook. I am grateful to the clergy for their willingness to engage in this strategic way. During the tour we had Morning Tea and conversation about the Huntlee Development with the CEO from Perth, Danny Murphy who briefed us on the size of the proposed development adjacent to Branxton – a new town of 20,000 people when it is completed.

Spirituality Centre at Islington as a Fresh Expression of Church

I also want to pay tribute at this Synod to the people of Saint Mark's Islington. I recently met with the Parish Council of Mayfield, Islington and Carrington (MICA) to review the proposed renovation of Saint Mark's Church that would function as a centre of spirituality as a fresh expression of church initiative under the guidance of the Reverend John Power. The proposal involved consideration rearrangement of a church in which some of that small elderly congregation had worshipped all their lives.

I was very encouraged by their generosity of spirit, their openness to the future and their deep love of their Anglican tradition that had so formed them that they could imitate Abraham in undertaking initiatives in their old age that called for great trust and openness. I salute the lovely people of Saint Mark's Islington as encouragers to us all throughout the Diocese to be like Abraham and follow the promptings of the Lord, even though we cannot know the final outcomes.

I want to assure the Synod that despite the great and urgent challenges before us as a Diocese there is much to encourage us. One of the great privileges that Bishop Peter and I have along with the Archdeacons and the Diocesan Ministry Development Officer is to see Sunday by Sunday parishes working hard to be missional and to be obedient to our Lord's commission to make disciples.

A Missional Identity

I want to encourage parishes throughout the Diocese to consider these suggestions for developing more intentionally as a missional church. I will enumerate these suggestions in dot point form and I hope that they will be considered at parish council and ministry team meetings.

- Be intentional. I interviewed a young priest who has joined a gym not only to maintain his physical fitness but to network amongst his own age group to invite them into Christian discipleship. He told me of six people who are now worshipping in his parish as a result of his invitations to them.
- Develop entry points into the life of the congregations that are more than the worship services. People may belong before they believe. Their belonging may engender their subsequent believing.
- Develop carefully, with the goal of long-term practice, worship services that are open to people who do not know the Christian story. These have to be highly experiential and teaching services. Such services are transitional in that those who commit to Christ through them will require deeper formation in small groups. The parishes of The Camden Haven and Kincumber have significant expertise in such services and will be a good resource.
- We need to be innovative liturgically. Many churches are now equipped with data projectors and could screen clips from films or television programmes that could be sermon starters or discussion starters. All of us are becoming more visual as we are formed by a television/internet culture. The Christian story can be illustrated with contemporary media just as Jesus was innovative with parables. Such liturgical innovation must ensure that the focus is on God (the real aspiration of worship) and not just on human satisfaction (we are not registered liturgical therapists).
- Work with natural theology to help people be open to revealed theology. This is an area where the NSTM can help greatly. Our conversations do need theological nuancing and people need training in this. This form of mission will become more important as the new atheism becomes more publicized and more polemic.

Even the designation 'missional church' suggests a change in culture. And we have to acknowledge that we are feeling the bumpiness of this transition because it is different, it is new for us, and it takes us outside the usual Anglican sense of comfort. We have inherited a genteel form of religious practice that has thought public discussion of religious faith a little uncouth. We are slowly throwing off our inherited social sensitivities and recognizing that the call to be missionary is as startling for us as it was for the very first disciples who themselves had not been nurtured in a missionary religion (Judaism).

Ordained Local Ministry

The development of Ordained Local Priests and Deacons within Ministry Teams in parishes in the Diocese is introducing another model of ministry that has been successively endorsed and

encouraged by Lambeth Conferences since 1988¹². Pioneering dioceses, often in remote and sparsely populated regions within the Anglican Communion, were the first to feel the pastoral and sacramental pressures of not being able to afford (financially) priests and deacons who were stipendiary and who had been trained in a semi-monastic seminary model of formation. These dioceses were impeded in their mission and ministry because stipendiary clergy were simply not an option.

The pressures felt by these dioceses led to a re-evaluation of the stipendiary/professional model of priesthood. Significant theologians both from the Roman Catholic and Anglican traditions wrote encouragingly about the development of ordained local ministers, deacons and priests.¹³ Their foundational writing provided the theological impetus for other dioceses within the Anglican Communion to address the issues of mission that they were facing, even when they were not facing financial constraints in the provision of ministry. I have in previous addresses to Synod developed the theological and ecclesiological rationale for this other model of ordained ministry. I do not intend to revisit that here.

What, however, I do want to suggest is that when another complementary model of ministry appears some within the preceding model can view this as a clash of culture rather than as another legitimate expression of culture, namely ordained ministry. Viewing the development of ordained local ministers as a clash with an existing pattern of ordained ministry is to deny the history of the development of the model of stipendiary ministry that we now have, as much as to limit the Diocese in its possible missional potential.

The Diocese requires great investments of energy from its ministry personnel if it is to address the shrinkage in its worshipping numbers on Sundays and if it is to turn around the financial limits that parishes are experiencing. The vision is to release stipendiary clergy to be the missionary and mission co-coordinator in each parish, undertaking the 'on-the-edge-work' required to respond effectively to the indifference of Australian culture to the gospel and to the Anglican Church. If we do not attend to the malaise of indifference by creative, imaginative and engaging initiatives then that indifference will solidify into disbelief, and that will make the task of mission much harder for us.

The development of Ordained Local Ministers set within parish Ministry Teams provides resources to parishes and stipendiary trained priests to share the essential pastoral and sacramental work with others so that stipendiary clergy are given time and space to lead in mission. If such leadership is not taken up, parishes will further decline. We know this from sheer observation. We know this from consultants who have worked with the Diocese like Alice Mann and Bishop Stephen Cottrell, now the Bishop of Chelmsford.

The intentional focus of ordained local ministers within the Diocesan vision has always been concentrated on the area of local mission. In order to articulate this commitment more clearly I will be re-licensing all OLMs as Deacons and Priests in Local Mission. Such an emphasis intends to encourage all teams and congregations to take on this commitment as well.

¹² See The Report of the Lambeth Conference 1978. London: CIO Publishing, pp79-80; The Truth Shall Make You Free. 1988. London: Church House Publishing, sections 124-1215, pp.56, 57; The Official Report of the Lambeth Conference 1998. 1999. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, pp.201,202.

¹³ See Edward Schillebeeckx. 1981. Ministry: a case for change. London, SCM and Roland Allen. 1986. Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

The unwillingness to undertake this development in ministry has to be scrutinized because there are not sustainable theological or ecclesiological objections to ordained local ministry. A picture is emerging within the Diocese of some parishes that are growing and others seriously declining, even with the population growth that the Diocese is experiencing and will continue to experience. We have to prepare some parishes for the population growth that will happen in the next decade, and we have to begin to do that now for there is inevitably a lead-time in any preparation.

Whether you welcome ordained local ministry or not, this is the way forward for the vast majority of parishes in the Diocese, if we are to ensure that parishes do become missional communities. The structures underlying this Synod reflect the composition of ordained clergy from decades ago. The composition is changing. I believe that we have to find a way, perhaps at first a tentative way as is proposed in the Ordinance before Synod, to recognize the new composition of clergy and to ensure that that composition is reflected in the membership of Synod.

Professional Standards

The introduction in 2005 of the Professional Standards Ordinance and the protocol for the behaviour of clergy and licensed lay workers Faithfulness in Service was a significant cultural movement that has caused some turbulence, some anxiety and even some outright opposition. The change that this Ordinance introduced was intended for the welfare of the whole Church, to ensure as far as practicable that the Church be a safe place for all and that there be explicit guidance for clergy and licensed lay workers about their behaviour especially when representing the Church in ministry.

The model General Synod Professional Standards Ordinance has sought to shift the Anglican Church from an amateur culture to a professional culture. Let me explain both adjectives. By 'amateur' I do not suggest unskilled; rather I am suggesting that the culture of expectations that drove us, and particularly the clergy, was an informal set of expectations and revered customs. These were not codified nor were they handed down by any explicit formational method. Of course, there would have been frequent reference to the Exhortation by the Bishop in the Ordinal.

The behavioural expectations were imbued by observation of senior priests, and particularly from the admiration of heroic priestly figures. The culture was simply a culture of imitation – of those who were esteemed because of their godliness and their pastoral or missional zeal. This was quite informal although efficacious and godly behaviour was the subject of many clergy retreat addresses.

There was a clerical culture that carried such formation within our Church. Like any culture this clerical culture could be reduced to 'this is the way we do things around here'. Of course, such a culture could be a mix both of high aspirations and forms of control and exertion of power that were unhealthy. I spent my curacy in a position in which now in hindsight I recognize that I was psychologically abused through a misuse of control and power.

But in those days the entire culture was very different from the egalitarianism of today's culture and there were dioceses in which strict hierarchy ensured that power subjugated subordinates. This informal clerical culture has not been dead (if dead) for all that long a time.

This is what I mean when I speak about an amateur culture – a culture that was informal, that had no articulated structure to it and had no formal detailed publicly scrutinized compliance requirements.

A professional culture is a culture that is determined by the professions (declarations) its members make to ensure that behaviour matches the vision of the profession. We all know that such cultures have been developed for doctors, psychologists, lawyers and other professionals. We know too that serious failure to abide by the code of practice in those professions can lead to de-registration.

A professional culture has an explicit clearly articulated series of expectations that are designed to assist practitioners to behave well in the circumstances of their professions and thus to protect both the public and themselves. Such a culture has a code of practice, has regular training about the code of practice and has also processes to deal with infringements of the code of practice. This is what the Professional Standards Ordinance that was debated and passed at the first session of the 2005 Diocesan Synod sets out to achieve.

This new culture is a major shift and as with all major shifts of culture there has been some turbulence. But the requirement for a professional culture is irreversible.

Regrettably, there have been under the Professional Standards Ordinance some references by the Professional Standards Committee of potential examinable conduct. The procedures for the recently heard references by the Professional Standards Board have been reviewed by an eminent external lawyer, Professor Patrick Parkinson of Sydney University.

The Diocesan Council received Professor Parkinson's recommendations at its September 30th meeting. The Diocesan Council resolved at its September 30th meeting

"That

- (a) the Bishop's report concerning the Parkinson Report be received and noted;*
- (b) the recommendations of Professor Parkinson be noted;*
- (c) the Bishop refer those recommendations to the Professional Standards Committee and invite it to advise in writing, as to the steps that it will initiate in respect to these;*
- (d) the response of the Professional Standards Committee be tabled at the next meeting of this Diocesan Council".*

I have written to the members of the Professional Standards Committee requesting that they meet with me to indicate that the recommendations affecting the PSC's processes will be implemented.

Everyone involved in the implementation of Professional Standards is on a heightened learning trajectory and in the acute scrutiny of the media in Newcastle. The reputation of the churches has been damaged by the sexual abuse perpetrated by clergy and lay workers. A significant task before the churches is the regaining of trust. This will be a long-term process that will require from all churches integrity and transparency.

I have become increasingly aware of the extent of victims from sexual abuse by clergy. The circles of victimization are extensive and often unknown to Church authorities. This past year has been an agonizing year for me as the Bishop in dealing with the recommendations from the Professional Standards Board, in responding to victims and in fronting the media glare. I have become increasingly aware of the extent of the repercussions upon people for whom support cannot be possible until there is a media release that details the matter and thus enables people who are connected with the circumstances to avail themselves of support.

My sub-theme is the turbulence of cultural change. The implementation of the Professional Standards processes has created some turbulence for it is a cultural change that has shifted the church and especially the clergy from an amateur culture to a regulated professional culture. If you were to think that such a transition is regrettable, pause to consider the transitions in behaviour that all the members of the churches that Saint Paul founded in Greece and Turkey had to accommodate and integrate. Those first churches were full of cultural changes that went to the heart of their public and private behaviour.¹⁴

My other secondary observation is that the liberal culture that characterized the Anglican Church of Australia from the 1960s until recent times reflected largely the liberal culture of society. The emergence of sexual abuse within the Anglican Church especially pedophilia has propelled the General Synod in particular to develop the extensive and intensive protocol Faithfulness in Service that is a strong reaction to the liberalism of the previous era. In fact, it could almost verge on puritanism, itself an ethical aberration.

The Professional Standards Ordinance and its accompanying code of behavioural practice may, if pursued too far, produce a situation in which those converted post-puberty may find it difficult or even impossible to be considered as a candidate for ordination. Further, traditional testimonials may become a feature of past evangelicalism because the recounting of immoral behaviour, the life before conversion, may disqualify from potential leadership.

In saying this, I am not seeking to discredit the Professional Standards Ordinance or the necessity for a clear protocol of expected behaviour by Christian leaders. I am, however, cautioning against a fundamentalist approach to professional standards that could effectively work against the theology of conversion and sanctification. I indicate this issue as another aspect of the turbulence we are experiencing as a Church in the clash of cultures that marks this period of our history.

Asylum Seekers

The issue of the treatment of asylum seekers is still a matter of political debate and polarization. Throughout the election campaign both major political parties seemed timid in proposing an open policy of acceptance even though other nations throughout the world are facing greater pressures of refugees than Australia faces. For instance, in Syria there are about a million refugees within its northern border region, many of whom are Christians fleeing from the democratic Iraq that now persecutes them unlike the régime of Saddam Hussein who tolerated them because they prayed publicly for him.

I think that the treatment of and the processing of asylum seekers is one of the major moral issues facing Australia. You will know my thinking through my article in July in The Anglican Encounter. In that article I said

Those who now come to Australia as boat people are fleeing from oppression of various kinds. These oppressions make life intolerable in their present homelands.

Of all nations, Australia because of its foundational European settlement should be naturally sympathetic to the plight of those escaping from violence and terrorism. Many of the first arrivals in Australia were dumped here by an intolerant and brutal English penal system. Our very origins ought to alert us that European settlement in Australia was initially a settlement of the outcasts.

¹⁴ See for examples 1 Corinthians 5 and 6.

We must recall our origins for these have shaped our national identity. An unknown Egyptian monk once wrote, 'forgetfulness is the root of all evil'. If we forget our own origins that we all were originally boat people we will mistreat present-day boat people. If we are not careful we will embody the truism of Paulo Friere the Brazilian educator that the oppressed when they are liberated can in turn become oppressors.

And it is absolutely incumbent upon Christians through the teaching of Holy Scripture that we are to love the alien (the contemporary boat people) as we love ourselves.¹⁵ The shrinkage of the prophetic tradition from within consumer-driven Christianity is a very real concern for our orthodoxy and orthopraxy.

I think Australia is a bastion of social cohesion, of successful integration and assimilation. We have a great story to celebrate that indicates clearly our capacity to be a diverse yet harmonious nation of great ethnic diversities.

Archbishop Roger Herft spoke movingly at the recent Fifteenth General Synod about asylum seekers from Afghanistan. I have the Archbishop's permission to quote him:

On a visit to Christmas Island I had an opportunity to meet a group of young men – asylum seekers from Afghanistan. They described the hazardous journey they had made in a small wooden boat in heavy seas. Turbulent weather and storms had meant that some had fallen overboard and drowned.

In the course of discussion I asked them why they had risked their lives to come to Australia. Their response surprised me. They sobbed as they outlined the violent ways in which the Taliban had held their village captive. The bombings had left their houses in ruins. When they were liberated by the Coalition Forces they observed the different way in which the Australian soldiers approached their elders, women and children. However high the security risk the elders were treated with respect, and permission was asked before the Australian soldiers entered to search their homes. Care was taken to see that the cultural mores surrounding women were safeguarded.

If the young men had stayed, the Taliban would have forced them to join their military units. Money was borrowed for them to leave. When it came to deciding in which country they would seek asylum the elders said to them, 'Go to the country where the soldiers treated us with dignity. If they treated us with respect in this war zone, they will treat you well in their home country.'

I wonder what these young men on Christmas Island now think of Australia. I do welcome the recent announcement by the Prime Minister of a much more humane régime for families that have been held in the detention centres.

The Environment

There is no doubt that we are becoming more and more conscious of our responsibility to the earth itself and to future generations to care for and even to heal the earth. In my previous ministry in the wheat belt of Western Australia I saw not only the oozing scars of salt pans (the consequence of dreadful soil degradation) but also heroic efforts by farmers to heal the land by implementing farming methods that did not rape the land. Often these farmers assisted by funding from Alcoa were attempting to rectify the damage done by previous generations of farmers.

¹⁵ See Deuteronomy 10:19.

The challenge before us in the Hunter is to deal with the issues raised by the mining and exporting of coal. Before, however, we criticize we must put our own house in order and ensure that as a Church we are treating the environment gently and not rapaciously. The questionnaire that Dr. Geoff Rigby circulated prior to Synod has raised our awareness about practical steps that each parish can undertake as much as practical steps that each Anglican can decide upon.

I have been working with the Diocesan Business Manager to green Bishops Court as much as is possible. We are installing solar panels that will contribute to the electricity grid. And we are installing tanks that will assist in lowering the consumption of water.

In the Environment Hour at Synod we will be informed as to possible practices that we can all adopt.

Why be so concerned about the Environment? Is it because we are being spooked into concern or is there a theological reason for good environmental practices?

There is strong theology to support the care of the environment that has been promoted more urgently and vocally by groups other than the churches. We seem to have lagged behind and the prophetic mantle has been cast upon environmental groups and even the Greens.

However, there are reasoned theological voices. One such voice has been the Dean. The Dean preached an excellently instructive sermon at the recent Blessing of the Animals Service in Christ Church Cathedral:

In our thanksgiving for creation and our acknowledgement of the ways in which we have failed in our stewardship we are brought face to face with the theological question of who we are and who we think God is.

The way in which we engage with the sanctity of other living creatures is a clear indicator of how aware we are of our responsibilities as stewards of creation. But it also says something about how we understand ourselves and our place in the world.

Stewardship is about more than ensuring that things are right for us, that they guarantee that we will have what we want. Stewardship is nuanced by the responsibility to consider the needs of those weaker than ourselves. The Christian understanding of God is of a God who took account of our weakness, who humbled himself, who condescended to identify with us in our weakness.

At the extreme end of a certain Christian understanding of the world is a serious and debilitating selfishness. Seeing this world as a purely transitory and temporary setting means that there is no reason to care for or about the environment; sustaining this world simply puts aside concern about the world to come. Such a view denies the way in which the Bible, along with so many other understandings of the role of human beings in the world, puts at the forefront the idea of stewardship.

The Environment Hour with its emphasis upon practicality will open up for us dimensions of active stewardship.

The Crisis in Mental Health Care in Australia

This year at a Samaritans fund-raising dinner I had the pleasure of meeting and listening to the Australian of the Year, Professor Patrick McGorry speak about the state of mental health care in Australia. Professor McGorry was honoured for his clinical research work and for his advocacy. His address that night was chilling and disturbing.

It is well known that one in five adult Australians will struggle with mental illness sometime during life. That's 20% of the population!

75% of all mental illness is realized from early adolescence through to young adulthood, often robbing our young people of the opportunity to complete education, start work and have families. Sometimes these young people are marginalized to the fringes of society with little opportunity to access services that will assist them with their recovery from this most debilitating illness.

It accounts for over 13% of the burden of significant health issues but attracts only 6% of the health budget. This means that services are provided when the illness is firmly entrenched in the person's psyche, with the hope of recovery somewhat diminished.

The collateral damage to the community is enormous with each dollar spent directly on services four more dollars are lost indirectly through reduced workplace productivity, lost tax earnings and reduced participation by carers.

We need a new approach!

We need a new approach because members of our community are being turned away without receiving care due to a lack of resources.

We need a new approach because members of our community can suffer alone and in silence hidden from sight.

We need a new approach because members of our community are unable to find employment.

We need a new approach because the collateral damage to families in our community often results in family dysfunction and breakdown.

We need a new approach because members of our community with mental illness disconnect from the community and often experience additional traumas such as discrimination and stigma.

We need a new approach because some members of our community with mental illness will even end up in Gaol because there are no other options and they have not received the mental health care they needed, when they needed it.

We need a new approach because a fundamental responsibility for a compassionate society is to care for and treat appropriately those with health issues.

What can we do to indicate clearly that we understand mental health to be a primary national health issue.

As a community we need to build our collective awareness about mental health and mental illness so we can recognize it, and respond proactively before people suffer unnecessarily.

We need to actively support the Samaritans mental health programs such as Monet's restaurant and Samaritans Lawn and Garden services.

We need individually and collectively to take every opportunity to speak up about mental illness and break down the barriers, overcome stigma and ultimately defeat discrimination.

We need to support and lobby for more services that focus on early intervention and support. The Samaritans innovative Headspace programs in Maitland and Gosford are something that we should celebrate and make known.

We need to work out how to provide the opportunity for people with mental illness to gain access to stable and affordable housing where they can find sanctuary and begin their journey towards recovery

We need to directly influence the government, community and corporate sectors to think more creatively about how people with mental illness can access employment pathways and engage in meaningful and rewarding work.

We need to create opportunities so people with mental illness can gain new skills and grow both personally, professionally and spiritually.

We need to find ways to support the re-calibration of the mental health service sector to ensure that services are responsive and people can get what they need when they need it!

We need change and we need it now. The service sector knows this, the families know it and most of all people with mental illness know it!

The Clash of Cultures and the Tradition of the Church

Throughout this address I have sought to highlight in reference to the issues and the opportunities before the Diocese, the clash of cultures which we are experiencing and which can provoke anxiety and confusion. I have indicated that such a clash of cultures is not novel for the Church.

Indeed, Christianity and the Church itself were formed within a clash of cultures instigated by the very ministry of the Lord Jesus. You will recall that provocative text

Do you think that I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! ⁵²From now on, five in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three; ⁵³they will be divided: father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.¹⁶

Living within a clash of cultures is normative for the Church. The recognition that we are to be a missional church has sharpened our awareness of the clash of cultures as has the impact upon us of the other issues that I have detailed. Of course, such awareness on a daily basis does produce tension not unlike the tension that lay over the church of the apostolic period with its high expectancy of the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ. So living with tension has mostly been a condition of the Church's life.

¹⁶ Luke 12:51-53.

In all of this I am sensitive to those amongst us who are anxious that the Tradition of the Church is being compromised or even jettisoned. To those who have such sensitive consciences I want to assure them of my feeling for them and respect of them.

I want also to indicate from a catholic-evangelical perspective that Tradition is not something that is static. To quote Yves Congar, tradition 'is the permanence of the past in the present, from the heart of which it prepares the future'.¹⁷ That permanence cannot be static; but will be shaped anew in each generation, and that too is part of the tradition of the Church.¹⁸ 'True tradition', suggests Congar, 'is not servility but fidelity.'¹⁹ As Cardinal John Henry Newman said, 'to live is to change.'²⁰

Thanks

Thankfulness is a chief characteristic of the Christian life. Saint Paul is effusive with his thankfulness even in those letters to churches in which he is most ferocious. I am deeply conscious of the huge privilege in serving as the Bishop of Newcastle. I am grateful to many people for their faithful prayers for my ministry as Bishop.

I am thankful for all those who have 'put their hands to the plough and have not looked back.'²¹ My sense of particular gratitude is evoked by the dedication and sheer hard work of the members of the Bishop's Advisory Group – Bishop Peter Stuart, John Cleary (the Diocesan Business Manager), Archdeacon Stephen Pullin, Archdeacon Arthur Copeman, Father David Battrick (the Diocesan Ministry Development Officer) and the Reverend John Power (the Diocesan Director of Ordinands and Fresh Expressions Consultant).

I am grateful also to the staff of the Diocesan Office for their support and especially to Amanda Zaicos, my very caring secretary.

Conclusion

This is the third and final session of the Forty-Ninth Synod of the Diocese of Newcastle. Next year will dawn the first session of the Fiftieth Synod. Bishop Tyrrell summoned the first session of the First Synod on August 15th 1865.

I am planning a public seminar on Church Governance to celebrate this Jubilee on August 14th and 15th 2011. I have invited the Reverend Dr. Bruce Kaye, a former General Secretary of the General Synod, to present a paper on the history of Synodical government, and the Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Philip Freier to look into the future forecasting what Church governance might become. The first Bishop of Melbourne, Charles Perry, was consecrated along with William Tyrrell and Augustus Short in Westminster Abbey on Saint Peter's Day, June 29th 1847. I have also invited the Reverend Paul Robertson to give a paper focusing on the history of synods in this Diocese.

¹⁷ Yves Congar. 1964. *Tradition and the Life of the Church*. London: Burns & Oats, p.107.

¹⁸ Charlotte Methuen. *Passing on the Flame: A reflection on Tradition, Ecclesiology, and History in The Hope of Things to Come*. 2010. Ed. Mark Chapman. London: Mowbray, p32.

¹⁹ Yves Congar. 1964. p.8.

²⁰ Henry Chadwick. 1994. *Ministry and Tradition* in idem, *Tradition and Exploration: Collected Papers on Theology and the Church*. Norwich: The Canterbury Press, p.15.

²¹ See Luke 9:62.

We turn now to our work as Synod conscious of our inheritance of faith and alert to the demands of the present and the challenges of the future. May God's graciousness characterize the working of this Synod so that we edify one another and give glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Bishop's Charge to Synod October 2010
The Right Reverend Dr Brian Farran
Diocese of Newcastle
New South Wales—Australia

Visitors to the Diocese

Father Brendan Byrne SJ	The Right Reverend Clyde Igara, Bishop of Dogura, Papua New Guinea
The Most Reverend Dr Phillip Aspinall	
The Right Reverend George Hearn	The Right Reverend Andrew Curnow
The Right Reverend Philip Richardson, Bishop of Taranaki, New Zealand	The Right Reverend Robert Forsyth The Reverend Gloria Shipp
The Reverend Alice Mann, Senior Consultant, Alban Institute	African Visitors:
The Right Reverend Stephen Hale	The Right Reverend Johannes Angela, Bishop of Bondo, Kenya, and Mrs Elizabeth Akinyi Otieno Angela
The Right Reverend Kay Goldsworthy	The Venerable Canon Shadrack Jackim Owuor
The Right Reverend Andrew Proud, Bishop of the Horn of Africa, and Mrs Janice Proud	Mrs Margaret Andeso Owuor Mrs Teresa Atieno Handa
The Reverend Michael Wood, Diocese of Perth	Dedication of the Diocesan Office:
The Right Reverend Stuart Robinson	Mrs Anne Bayton
The Right Reverend Trevor Edwards	Mr Jim Housden
The Right Reverend Richard Hurford	Mr Peter Housden
The Right Reverend John Stead	Mrs Barbara Parker
The Right Reverend Doug Stevens	Mrs Anne Morris
The Right Reverend Keith Slater	Lord Mayor John Tate and Mrs Cathy Tate
The Reverend Michael Whelan	

Appointments, Ordinations, Resignations and Retirements

The Anglican Church of Australia

Mr Michael Sparrow retired as Registrar in the Diocese of the Northern Territory at the end of 2009.

Mrs Jackie Pearse was installed as Registrar in the Diocese of the Northern Territory in mid-January 2010.

The Reverend Di Langham resigned as National Secretary of the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) on 26 February 2010.

The Right Reverend Alan Stewart resigned as Bishop of Wollongong.

The Right Reverend Peter Hayward was consecrated Bishop in the Church of God in the Diocese of Sydney to be Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Sydney and Bishop of Wollongong on 13 April 2010 .

The Right Reverend Stephen Pickard resigned as Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Adelaide following Easter 2010.

The Reverend Dianne Langham was appointed to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council on 2 June 2010.

The Right Reverend Keith Slater was appointed by the Primate to the Australian Council for Anglican Religious Life (as advised 23 June 2010).

The Right Reverend Allan Ewing resigned as Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Canberra-Goulburn.

The Right Reverend Allan Ewing was enthroned as the ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Bunbury on 10 July 2010.

The Reverend Jonathan Inkpin resigned as General Secretary of the NSW Ecumenical Council on 31 July 2010.

The Right Reverend Ross Davies resigned as Bishop of The Murray on 24 September 2010.

Diocesan Appointments and Moves

The Reverend Amanda Wheatley was appointed Rector of the parish of Merriwa on 26 October 2009.

The Reverend Daniel Dries was commissioned Priest-in-Charge of the parish of Belmont on 9 November 2009.

The Reverend Roger Zohrab was appointed Locum in the parish of Branxton-Greta-Lochinvar on 25 November 2009.

The Reverend Andrew Mead was appointed Assistant Priest in the parish of Singleton on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Daniel Connor was appointed Assistant Priest in the parish of Kincumber on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Timothy Goldsmith was appointed Assistant Priest in the parish of Wyoming on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Peter Anderson was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Stockton on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Pauline Grabham was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Stockton on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Bill Green was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Wingham on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Sandra Hulyer was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Singleton on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Karen Jansson was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Stockton on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Anne Lye was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Nelson Bay on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Ruth Brand was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Charlestown on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Wendy Jackson was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Murrurundi on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Barbara Morgan was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Murrurundi on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Robert (Bob) Peattie was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Southlakes on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Peter Rothnie was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Murrurundi on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Loy Thompson was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Southlakes on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend John Power, Consultant to the Diocese in Fresh Expressions of Church was appointed Diocesan Director of Ordinands on 1 December 2009.

Mr John Cleary was re-appointed Diocesan Business Manager for a further five year period on 1 January 2010.

The Reverend Bruce Perry has been re-appointed Team Leader of Callaghan Ministry Unit and Chaplain of Callaghan Campus of the University of Newcastle on 1 January 2010.

The Reverend Peter Middleton was appointed Area Dean of Lake Macquarie Area Deanery on 19 January 2010.

The Reverend Barbara Howard was appointed Supervising Priest (part-time) in the parish of Murrurundi on 23 January 2010.

The Reverend Joshua Bovis was appointed Family Minister in the parish of Muswellbrook with responsibility for the evening congregation as well as Chaplain at Scone Grammar on 24 January 2010.

The Reverend Richard Harvey was appointed Associate Priest in the parish of Kincumber with direct responsibility for the St David's, Avoca, congregation on 1 February 2010.

The Reverend Lyle Hughes was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Toukley Budgewoi on 1 February 2010.

The Reverend Sheila Bourne was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Singleton on 6 February 2010.

The Reverend Robyn Pullin was appointed Children and Family Ministry Officer with CEY Ministries on 10 February 2010.

The Reverend Janise Deaves was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Blue Gum Hills with on 14 February 2010.

The Reverend Julie Turnbull was commissioned Rector of the parish of Forster-Tuncurry on 15 February 2010.

The Reverend Clive Gerard was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Swansea on 15 February 2010.

The Reverend Canon Hugh Bright was installed to the Sawyer Canonry of Christ Church Cathedral on 21 February 2010.

The Reverend Stephen Moore was appointment Area Dean of the Deanery of Paterson on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Jessica Grant was appointed Deacon Assistant in the parish of Forster Tuncurry on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Joshua Bovis was appointed Deacon Assistant in the parish of Muswellbrook on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Pauline Grabham was appointed Priest in Local Ministry in the parish of Williamtown-Medowie-Mallabula on 7 March 2010.

The Reverend David Hesketh was appointed Locum Chaplain to Anglican Care on 12 March 2010.

The Reverend David Battrick accepted a five year extension to the position of Ministry Development Officer on 13 March 2010.

The Reverend Selwyn Dornan was appointed Associate Priest in the Callaghan Ministry Team with responsibility for Waratah and Georgetown congregations on 15 March 2010.

The Reverend Katherine Bowyer was commissioned Canon to the Ordinary, Canon-in-Charge of Missionary Affairs on 21 March 2010.

The Very Reverend Dr James Rigney accepted the Bishop's appointment as Examining Chaplain on 24 March 2010.

The Reverend Jim Hudson was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Morpeth on 5 April 2010.

The Reverend Stuart Benson was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Muswellbrook on 6 April 2010.

The Reverend Canon Dr Julia Perry was given a General Licence on 13 April 2010.

The Reverend Janise Deaves was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of New Lambton on 13 April 2010.

The Reverend Wilfred Redden was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Raymond Terrace on 25 March 2010.

The Reverend Canon Brian Gibbs was appointed Chaplain to Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College and Community Priest in the parish of Blue Gum Hills on 19 April 2010.

The Reverend Margaret Carr was appointed Chaplain to the Professional Standards Committee on 3 May 2010.

The Reverend Janise Deaves was appointed Chaplain to the Professional Standards Committee on 3 May 2010.

The Reverend David Barry Lloyd was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Wyoming on 1 June 2010.

The Reverend Bruce Perry was appointed as Area Dean of the Deanery of Newcastle West on 2 June 2010.

The Reverend Dianne Langham was appointed to the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council on 2 June 2010.

The Reverend John Marsh was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Singleton on 7 June 2010.

The Reverend John Brooker was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Cardiff on 7 June 2010.

The Reverend William Howarth was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Swansea for the period 18 June to 23 July 2010.

The Reverend Richard Loh was appointed Associate Priest of the parish of Gosford (with a special focus on Point Clare and Mangrove Mountain) on 1 July 2010.

The Reverend Ann Watson was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of New Lambton for the period 1 to 31 July 2010.

Ryan Derek Frank King was appointed Youth Ministry Assistant in the parish of Belmont North-Redhead on 21 July 2010.

The Reverend Melbourne Nelson was appointed Locum of the parish of Singleton on 22 July 2010.

The Reverend Ann Watson was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Raymond Terrace on 1 August 2010.

The Reverend John Southerden was appointed Intentional Interim Priest in the parish of Terrigal on 8 August 2010.

The Reverend Roger Zohrab was appointed Interim Priest in the parish of Branxton-Greta-Lochinvar on 1 September 2010.

The Reverend Gary Harman was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Cardiff for the period 1 September to 31 December 2010.

The Reverend Mark Watson was commissioned Canon Pastor of Christ Church Cathedral on 12 September 2010.

The Reverend Patricia Lynne Caddis was appointed Locum Tenens of the parish of Bateau Bay on 13 September 2010.

The Reverend Charles (Charlie) Murry was commissioned Rector of the parish of Singleton on 27 September 2010.

Ordinations

The Reverend Daniel Connor was ordained Priest in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Timothy Goldsmith was ordained Priest in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Andrew Mead was ordained Priest in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Peter Anderson was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Ruth Brand was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Pauline Grabham was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Bill Green was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

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The Reverend Anne Lye was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Barbara Morgan was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Robert (Bob) Peattie was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Peter Rothnie was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Loy Thompson was ordained Priest in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 30 November 2009.

The Reverend Jessica Grant was ordained Deacon in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Joshua Bovis was ordained Deacon in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Barbara Bagley was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Wilma Bond was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Donald Grace was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Helen Holliday was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Walter Jarvis was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Garry Kerr was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Juleen Partridge was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Stephen Shrubbs was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Elisabeth Vittali-Ross was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Catherine Walker was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Alison Wooden was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Elaine Young was ordained Deacon in Local Ministry in the Church of God on 24 February 2010.

The Reverend Christopher Yates was ordained Deacon in the Church of God at St Stephens House Chapel, Oxford, UK, on 11 July 2010. Christopher will take up the position of Deacon-Assistant in the parish of Williamtown-Medowie-Mallabula when he migrates to Australia with his family.

Parish Ministry Teams

Scone Parish Ministry Team was commissioned on 25 October 2009.

Wingham Parish Ministry Team was commissioned on 8 November 2009.

Bateau Bay Parish Ministry Team was commissioned on 8 November 2009.

Toronto Parish Ministry Team was commissioned on 19 December 2009.

Harrington-Coopernook Parish Ministry Team was commissioned on 20 December 2009.

Cockle Bay Anglican Community Parish Ministry Team was commissioned on 27 June 2010.

Retirements

The Reverend Janise Deaves retired as Priest-in-Charge of Birmingham Gardens-Callaghan Ministries and Community Chaplain on 22 November 2009.

The Reverend Ann Watson retired as Rector of the parish of Toukley-Budgewoi on 3 February 2010.

The Reverend Canon Margaret Carr resigned from her positions as Diocesan Director of Ordinands, Pastoral Ministry Co-ordinator of the Callaghan Ministry Team and from the Sawyer Canonry of Christ Church Cathedral on 16 February, 2010. As Canon Carr was on Long Service Leave from 1 December to 16 February 2010 she therefore ceased to function as DDO, Pastoral Ministry Co-ordinator and Canon from 1 December, 2009.

The Reverend Canon Gary Harman retired as Rector of the parish of Singleton, Canon to the Ordinary, Canon-in-Charge of Missionary Affairs on 23 March, 2010.

The Reverend Canon Paul Robertson retired as Rector of New Lambton, Area Dean of Newcastle West and from the Tyrrell Canonry of Christ Church Cathedral on 21 April 2010.

The Reverend Rosemary Gillham retired as Rector of the parish of Wyoming and as Professional Standards contact person on 13 June 2010.

The Reverend Valerie McDonald retired as Assistant Priest in the parish of Gosford on 30 June 2010.

The Reverend Beatrice Pate retired as Rector of the parish of Raymond Terrace on 3 July 2010.

The Reverend Laurie Davies retired on 30 September 2010.

Resignations and/or Departures from the Diocese

The Reverend Selwyn Dornan resigned as Area Dean of Lake Macquarie on 28 October 2009.

Mrs Sue Sneddon accepted a redundancy from her position as Childrens and Family Worker with CEY Ministries on 13 November 2009.

Mr Mark Pullin accepted a redundancy from his position as Youth and Family Officer with CEY Ministries on 30 September 2009.

Mrs Jan Craft accepted a redundancy from her position as SRE Officer with CEY Ministries on 13 November 2009.

The Reverend Bruce Hoare resigned as Priest-in-Charge of the parish of Branxton-Greta-Lochinvar on 24 November 2009.

The Reverend Selwyn Dornan resigned as Rector of the parish of Swansea on 15 February, 2010.

Ms Karden Salomons resigned as an Administrative Assistant in the Diocesan Office on 25 February 2010.

Mrs Helen McLennan resigned as Diocesan Accountant on 24 March 2010.

The Reverend Audrey Fuller resigned from part time ministry as Locum at Anglican Care on 31 March 2010.

Mr Scott Forrest resigned as Administrative Assistant in the Diocesan Office on 22 April 2010.

The Reverend Canon Dr Julia Perry resigned as Chaplain to Anglican Care on Monday 26 April 2010.

The Reverend Peter Tinney resigned as Chaplain to the Samaritans Foundation from 18 June 2010.

Miss Emily Meyer resigned as Administrative Assistant in the Diocesan Office on 28 September 2010.

Arrivals

Ms Sharon Waters commenced as Business Manager of the Newcastle Anglican Schools Corporation on 16 November 2009.

Ms Emily Meyer commenced as an Administrative Assistant in the Diocesan Office on 15 December 2009.

Mrs Margaret Gibbs was appointed Executive Officer of the Newcastle Anglican Schools Corporation on 11 January 2010.

Ms Jan Craft was appointed SRE Ministry Officer with CEY Ministries on 15 February 2010.

Mrs Annette Shorten was appointed Youth and Events Ministry Officer on 15 February 2010.

Mr Michael Elliott (Director of Professional Standards) and **Mrs Jane Musgrave** (Administrative Assistant) relocated from Zimmerman House to the Diocesan Office on 8 March 2010.

Miss Emma Haining commenced as an Administrative in the Diocesan Office on 29 March 2010.

Mr David Hartley commenced as Diocesan Accountant on 10 May 2010.

Mrs Belinda Archer commenced as an Administrative Assistant in the Diocesan Office on 31 May 2010.

The Reverend Charlie Murry was commissioned Rector of the parish of Singleton on 27 September 2010.

Deconsecrations, Consecrations and Blessings

Bishop Housden Hall along with the Parker Room and Stibbard Room were dedicated and blessed as the new Diocesan Office and Meeting Rooms on 21 November 2009.

St Mark's Church in the parish of Terrigal, was deconsecrated on 11 April 2010.

Holy Trinity Church in the parish of Terrigal was consecrated on 6 June 2010.

Special Anniversaries

The Reverend Carl Feldman celebrated his 50th Anniversary of Deaconing on 28 February 2010.

The Reverend Peter Tinney celebrated his 25th Anniversary of Priesting on 1 March 2010.

The Reverend George Garnsey celebrated his 50th Anniversary of Deaconing on 20 March 2010.

The Right Reverend Dr Brian Farran celebrated his 5th Anniversary of enthronement as Bishop of Newcastle on 24th June 2010.

The Reverend Noel Boyce celebrated his 40th Anniversary of Priesting on 24 June 2010.

Mrs Eva Williams (widow of the late Canon Milton Williams) celebrated her 100th Birthday on 23 August 2010.

The Reverend Max Sainsbury celebrated his 50th Anniversary Priesting on 24 August 2010.

The Reverend David Craig celebrated his 25th Anniversary of Priesting on 1 October 2010.

Awards

Ms Janice Flemming of Telarah-Rutherford parish received a prestigious award during Education Week citing excellence in education and dedication to students, fellow teachers and the Telarah community.

In Memoriam

Among the faithful departed, we make special mention of:

Mrs Margaret Butterss wife of The Right Reverend Bob Butterss, died on 1 December, 2009.

The Reverend Rod Turner died on Friday 15 January 2010.

The Reverend Russel Avery (of Sydney) died on 2 February, 2010.

Mrs Elaine Holland wife of the Reverend Bruce Holland (retired priest in the parish of Wyoming) died on 18 February 2010.

Mrs Karen Byron wife of Denis Byron (former CEO of Anglican Care) died on 5 March 2010.

The Reverend David Philp (retired priest in the Diocese from the Diocese of North Queensland) died on 23 March 2010.

Mrs Leila Benson wife of the late Eric Benson and mother of the Reverend Stuart Benson and Howard Benson died on 7 May 2010.

Mrs Ena Turvey wife of Father Warwick Turvey died on Sunday 18 July.

Mrs Jennifer Smith wife of Father David Smith died on 19 July 2010.

Ms Ros Frame sister of Canon Brian Gibbs died on 25 July 2010.

Mrs Heather Litchfield sister of Mr Richard Turnbull and sister-in-law of the Reverend Julie Turnbull died on 29 July 2010.

Mrs Kath Miller mother of Barbara Davies and mother-in-law to the Reverend Laurie Davies died on 28 September 2010.

Mrs Deidre Gummow wife of Robert Gummow, Verger at Christ Church Cathedral died on 29 September 2010.

Mr Roy Hibben father of the Reverend Julie Turnbull died on 5 October 2010.

Mr Kenneth Drury father of Mrs Norene Robertson and father-in-law of the Reverend Paul Robertson died on 9 October 2010.

Mrs Dorothy Warrell mother of Mrs Robyn Southerden and mother-in-law of the Reverend John Southerden died on 14 October 2010.

2010 Charge to Synod



Bishop Brian Farran
12th Bishop of Newcastle