

The Archbishop's Appeal

The Archbishop's Appeal for the needy continues to raise significant sums for Anglicare special projects and the raising of \$1 million for the Family Centres Project seems to be a feasible hope before the end of this financial year. Around the middle of last year the Archbishop's Appeal raised its first million dollars which was satisfactory progress in less than five years. There is plenty of energy in the committee and its sub committees and I am grateful to those who give their time to make this a success and the Anglicare staff who support us so well.

The Great Chefs of Adelaide Luncheon continues to be a wonderful witness to the community about the work of Anglicare. Last year's net profit was over \$53,000. Additional successful campaigns for the Archbishop's Appeal were held for Christmas Pantry donations and a Winter Warmth program.

A tragic loss to the Appeal and to Anglicare was the sudden death, in a road accident, of Mrs Colleen Levy with whom I worked very closely in developing the programs of the Appeal. We greatly miss her.

The Cathedral

Dean David Richardson left us in July last year to become Dean of Melbourne and I believe is settling in well there. I am most grateful to Bishop Stuart Smith for being willing to step into the Acting Dean's position which he is doing so well. The Nomination Committee continues to meet in search of a new Dean and recent advertising has produced significant new names.

I am delighted that the Rev'd Graeme Kaines has returned to the diocese as Canon Pastor succeeding the Rev'd Bill Goodes who has gone to the Diocese of Willochra.

The Cathedral has continued to have a very active life and two projects in particular have caught general attention this year. The first was the release of the Cathedral Choir's second CD and the second was the launch of the project to raise funds for the Great North Window over the St Barnabas' door. Fundraising is moving quietly and well. It is hoped that the window will be installed before the end of 2001. The selection process for the artist and the design was an exhaustive one very efficiently led by Mrs Margaret Richardson and a committee of experts in the area. I am delighted with the design chosen which was developed by Mr David Wright of Melbourne who will make the window.

Sexual Misconduct

In 1994 Synod received a report and endorsed guidelines for receiving and handling complaints of sexual misconduct by church workers.

This is a difficult area but one which we must face squarely and honestly. Synod decided to do precisely that in 1994 and we continue to accept that responsibility.

During the past twelve months I have personally listened to the painful story of a person describing the hurt and effects of sexual abuse which I am told occurred in the context of his involvement with a church organisation. I have become aware of others who have similar stories to tell.

The damage and pain caused by such behaviour, always with long-term effects, is well attested in the literature and very evident in the stories of survivors.

I take this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Church, our deep sorrow over the occurrence of such abuse. I encourage any person who has suffered sexual abuse within a church context to call our confidential Helpline so that appropriate care can be offered and further abuse prevented.

Acknowledging the reality of abuse and understanding the suffering and harm it causes are important first steps for the Church to take. Whenever abuse occurs within the life of the church it harms, not only the individuals subjected to abuse, but also other members of their families and people close to them. Indeed any abuse of this sort damages the whole church. We all suffer as a result of this behaviour which is totally unacceptable.

But we must do more than acknowledge the hurt and express our regret that it should occur. We must take steps, and I'm glad to say we have, to provide care and support for those who have stories of hurt and suffering to tell. And we must and have put in place procedures to educate people about abusive behaviours, to receive complaints in a supportive way and to investigate and deal with complaints quickly, caringly and justly for all concerned.

Over the last twelve months a number of important steps have been taken.

First, a brochure outlining this Diocese's approach to sexual misconduct was produced by the Diocesan Response group and distributed to all parishes. I understand that the DRG is now in the process of revising and improving that brochure to make it even more effective.

Second, a telephone Helpline was established to provide support and advice to any person with concerns about sexual abuse in the Church and to provide assistance in using the Church's procedures.

Third, the original guidelines for dealing with complaints against clergy were revised and adapted to deal with complaints against any person in a position of responsibility in the Anglican Church: ordained or lay, employed, stipended or volunteer. We now have straightforward and comprehensive procedures in place. Diocesan Council adopted these revised procedures some months ago.

Fourth, we have developed a code of practice for the protection of children in the life of the Church. This code is broader than concerns about sexual abuse and includes all aspects of safety and responsibility for children in the care of the Church. Diocesan Council adopted these procedures at its April meeting this year after some twelve months' effort by a working group. Planning is now well under way for training events in different parts of the Diocese to ensure that all our church members who care for children are well informed about these issues and the procedures now in place.

Fifth, one clergy conference was devoted to addressing matters of professional conduct and exploring the sometimes complex issues which arise in pastoral situations.

All these initiatives have my whole hearted support and I trust they will receive yours and that of the whole Diocese.

Any steps we can take to offer the best care possible to those who have been harmed and to prevent such harm occurring in the future, deserve our energy and commitment.

MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS OF NOTE OF THE YEAR

- Both the parishes of Christ Church, North Adelaide and St Andrew's, Walkerville completed their **sesquicentenary** celebrations.