

**Circular C20/95 - D46/95
December 1995**

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1995

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT ST PAUL'S NATIONAL SEMINARY, KENSINGTON, NSW FROM WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER TO FRIDAY 1 DECEMBER 1995

ATTENDANCE The following were present:

- + Edward Cardinal Clancy, Archbishop of Sydney, *President*
- + Thomas Francis Little, Archbishop of Melbourne, *Vice President*
- + Francis Carroll, Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn
- + Leonard Faulkner, Archbishop of Adelaide
- + Joseph Eric D'Arcy, Archbishop of Hobart
- + Barry Hickey, Archbishop of Perth
- + John Bathersby, Archbishop of Brisbane
- + Ronald Mulkearns, Bishop of Ballarat
- + John Satterthwaite, Bishop of Lismore
- + Peter Quinn, Bishop of Bunbury
- + David Cremin, Auxiliary, Sydney
- + William Murray, Bishop of Wollongong
- + John Gerry, Auxiliary, Brisbane
- + Robert Healy, Auxiliary, Perth
- + Patrick Dougherty, Bishop of Bathurst
- + Patrick Murphy, Bishop of Broken Bay
- + Noel Daly, Bishop of Sandhurst
- + Bede Heather, Bishop of Parramatta
- + Francis Peter De Campo, Bishop of Port Pirie
- + Eugene James Cuskelly, Auxiliary, Brisbane
- + William Brennan, Bishop of Wagga Wagga
- + Geoffrey Robinson, Auxiliary, Sydney
- + Raymond Benjamin, Bishop of Townsville
- + Geoffrey Mayne, Military Ordinary, Australia
- + Patrick Power, Auxiliary, Canberra and Goulburn
- + Peter Connors, Auxiliary, Melbourne
- + Kevin Manning, Bishop of Armidale
- + Brian Heenan, Bishop of Rockhampton
- + Justin Bianchini, Bishop of Geraldton
- + James Foley, Bishop of Cairns
- + William Morris, Bishop of Toowoomba
- + Hilton Deakin, Auxiliary, Melbourne
- + Peter Ingham, Auxiliary, Sydney
- + Barry Collins, Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes
- + Michael Malone, Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle
- + Michael Putney, Auxiliary, Brisbane

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from:

Bishop Jeremiah Coffey, Bishop of Sale, Bishop O'Connell, Auxiliary, Melbourne, Bishop George Pell, Auxiliary, Melbourne, Bishop Peter Stasiuk, Eparch of St Peter and Paul, Melbourne and, for part of meeting, Cardinal Clancy, Bishop E Collins, Bishop De Campo, Archbishop Mickey, Bishop Ingham and Bishop Mulkearns.

3 OPENING MASS

The Mass of the Holy Spirit was Concelebrated in the chapel of the Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington, at 7 am on Wednesday 29 November 1995. The President of Conference, Cardinal Clancy, was the principal celebrant and preached the homily.

4 OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting began after recitation of Prayer During The Day at 9.15 am on Wednesday 29 November 1995.

The President, Cardinal Clancy, welcomed the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, Archbishop Franco Brambilla; the fraternal observers, from Papua New Guinea, Bishop Brian Barnes ofm, and, from New Zealand, Bishop Peter Cullinane; the observers from the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, Brother R. Julian McDonald cfc and Sister Helen Clarke rsc; and the Bishop-Elect of Broome, Christopher Saunders.

5 MESSAGE TO THE HOLY FATHER

The Conference sent the following message:

THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE, GATHERED IN PLENARY ASSEMBLY, SEND GREETINGS TO HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE IN AUSTRALIA TURN OUR THOUGHTS CONTINUALLY TO HIS HOLINESS' PERSISTENT PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL OF LIFE. WE SHALL AGAIN BE CONSIDERING THIS WEEK THE CHALLENGE POSED TO THE VALUES OF LIFE BY THE MOVEMENT IN OUR NATION FOR LEGALISATION OF EUTHANASIA.

WE SHALL ALSO BE LOOKING BEYOND OUR OWN SHORES, PLANNING FOR THE SYNOD FOR OCEANIA AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE GREAT JUBILEE YEAR 2000. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING WITH THE HOLY FATHER THESE OCCASIONS OF GRACE FOR OUR REGION AND OUR GENERATION.

AS WE SEND GREETINGS TO HIS HOLINESS, WE ASSURE HIM AGAIN OF OUR PRAYERS FOR HIM AND FOR HIS GREAT MINISTRY OF UNITY AND LEADERSHIP, ASKING ALSO HIS PRAYERS FOR OUR CHURCHES AND HIS APOSTOLIC BLESSING ON OUR PLENARY MEETING.

His Excellency, Cardinal Angelo Sodano, Secretary of State replied:

THE HOLY FATHER WAS PLEASED TO RECEIVE THE MESSAGE OF CORDIAL GREETINGS AND THE ASSURANCE OF PRAYERS SENT TO HIM ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE, MEETING IN PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN KENSINGTON. HE DEEPLY APPRECIATES THIS SIGN OF EPISCOPAL SOLIDARITY AND ECCLESIAL COMMUNION WITH THE SEE OF PETER. HIS HOLINESS PRAYS THAT THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH WILL GUIDE AND STRENGTHEN THE BISHOPS "TO BE UNTIRING PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL OF LIFE" (*EVANGELIUMVITAE*,82). HE SUPPORTS THEIR EFFORTS TO MAKE UNCONDITIONAL RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE THE FOUNDATION OF A NEW CIVILIZATION OF LOVE AND ENCOURAGES INITIATIVES TO PREPARE FOR THE JUBILEE YEAR IN THE LIGHT OF THREE-YEAR PROGRAMME OUTLINED IN *TERTIO MILLENNIO ADVENIENTE* (NOS. 39-54). ENTRUSTING YOU AND YOUR BROTHER BISHOPS TO THE PROTECTION OF MARY, MOTHER OF THE CHURCH, HIS HOLINESS CORDIALLY IMPARTS THE REQUESTED APOSTOLIC BLESSING.

6 CORRESPONDENCE

Greetings from Archbishop Gleeson and Bishop Jobst were gratefully received.

7 *REQUIESCAT IN PACE*

Rt Rev Dom Gregory Gomez osb, Abbot Nullius of New Norcia (1 June 1995)

8 MESSAGE TO SICK AND RETIRED BISHOPS

Conference agreed to send greetings to:

- + J W Gleeson, Former Archbishop of Adelaide
- + A F Fox, Former Bishop of Sale
- + J Cullinane, Former Auxiliary, Melbourne
- + M McKeon, Former Bishop of Bunbury
- + H Kennedy, Former Bishop of Armidale
- + J Torpie, Former Bishop of Cairns
- + J A Morgan, Former Military Vicar
- + A Khalife, Former Bishop of St Maroun, Sydney
- + E Perkins, Former Auxiliary, Melbourne

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- + F Rush, Former Archbishop of Brisbane
- + J Heaps, Former Auxiliary, Sydney
- + I Prasko, Former Eparch of St Peter and Paul, Melbourne
- + D Warren, Former Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes
- + John Jobst, Former Bishop of Broome
- + Leo Clarke, Former Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle
- + Jeremiah Coffey, Bishop of Sale
- + Edmund Collins, Bishop of Darwin
- + J O'Connell, Auxiliary Bishop, Melbourne

9 VISIT OF THE APOSTOLIC PRO-NUNCIO

His Excellency addressed the Plenary during its opening session.

10 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the April 1995 Meeting had been distributed to all members of the Conference.

MOTION That the Minutes of the April 1995
Plenary Meeting of the Australian
Catholic Bishops' Conference be taken as
read and be confirmed.

CARRIED

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REDACTED
Relevance

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REDACTED
Relevance

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PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

94 *SEXUAL ABUSE BY PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS*

The Committee distributed a draft of a document entitled: *Sexual Abuse by Priests and Religious: a Statement of Principles*. Although much consultation has already taken place in the preparation of this present draft, it must still be treated as a draft. Hence, in discussing the draft with their advisers, bishops were asked to kindly ensure that it remains a reserved document. Comments and advice on the document should be forwarded to Bishop Robinson prior to 31 January, 1996.

95 INFORMATION FOR CONFERENCE

The Committee offered the following items of information:

Catholic Church Insurances Ltd will provide a report on insurance matters concerning Professional Standards in time for the next Plenary. C.C.I, have also engaged the services of a **media consultant** to assist the personnel of C.C.I, in responding to enquires from the media. The service is also available to Dioceses and Religious Congregations. A Report is also being prepared by C.C.I, to provide advice on the safe retention of files held by Dioceses and Religious Congregations in dealing with disclosures of sexual assault by Catholic Church personnel.

A process has commenced for a review of the procedures which are to be used by dioceses and religious congregations in dealing with **allegations of sexual misconduct**. Meanwhile, the procedures which were approved by Conference in April 1992 remain in effect.

Arrangements are being made for a **meeting of representatives from English speaking Episcopal Conferences**, dealing with child sexual abuse by clergy. It is anticipated that the meeting will be held in Chicago, U.S.A. from 7-10 May 1996. Bishop Peter Connors, Father Brian Lucas, Sister Angela Ryan, c.s.b. and Mr Laurie Rolls (C.C.I.) will represent this Conference.

Bishop Geoff Robinson, Father John Usher and Sister Angela Ryan, c.s.b. will conduct a workshop at a **Conference on Sexual Exploitation by Health Professionals, Psychotherapists and Clergy** to be held in Sydney in April, 1996.

The following pages have been
intentionally excluded:

2217-2268, 2271-2288 inclusive