

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT ST PAUL'S
NATIONAL SEMINARY, 1 ROMA AVENUE, KENSINGTON,
NSW FROM FRIDAY 22 MAY TO 27 MAY 1998

- 1 ATTENDANCE** The following were present:
- + Edward Cardinal Clancy, Archbishop of Sydney, *President*
 - + Francis Carroll, Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn, *Vice President*
 - + Leonard Faulkner, Archbishop of Adelaide
 - + Joseph Eric D'Arcy, Archbishop of Hobart
 - + Barry Hickey, Archbishop of Perth
 - + John Bathersby, Archbishop of Brisbane
 - + George Pell, Archbishop of Melbourne
 - + John Satterthwaite, Bishop of Lismore
 - + Peter Quinn, Bishop of Bunbury
 - + David Cremin, Auxiliary for Sydney
 - + John Gerry, Auxiliary for Brisbane
 - + Robert Healy, Auxiliary for Perth
 - + Joseph O'Connell, Auxiliary for Melbourne
 - + Patrick Dougherty, Bishop of Bathurst
 - + Noel Daly, Bishop of Sandhurst
 - + William Brennan, Bishop of Wagga Wagga
 - + Geoffrey Robinson, Auxiliary for Sydney
 - + Raymond Benjamin, Bishop of Townsville
 - + Geoffrey Mayne, Military Ordinary, Australia
 - + Patrick Power, Auxiliary for Canberra and Goulburn
 - + Edmund Collins, Bishop of Darwin
 - + Peter Connors, Bishop of Ballarat
 - + Jeremiah Coffey, Bishop of Sale
 - + Kevin Manning, Bishop of Parramatta
 - + Brian Heenan, Bishop of Rockhampton
 - + Justin Bianchini, Bishop of Geraldton
 - + James Foley, Bishop of Cairns
 - + William Morris, Bishop of Toowoomba
 - + Peter Stasiuk, Eparch of St Peter and Paul, Melbourne
 - + Hilton Deakin, Auxiliary for Melbourne
 - + Peter Ingham, Auxiliary for Sydney
 - + Barry Collins, Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes
 - + Michael Malone, Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle
 - + Michael Putney, Auxiliary for Brisbane
 - + Christopher Saunders, Bishop of Broome
 - + Issam Darwish, Eparchy of Sydney for Melkite Greek Catholics
 - + Philip Wilson, Bishop of Wollongong
 - + David Walker, Bishop of Broken Bay
 - + Denis Hart, Auxiliary of Melbourne
 - + Adrian Doyle, Coadjutor Archbishop of Hobart
 - Monsignor Francis Ryan, Administrator of Armidale

2 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received, for the whole meeting, from:

Mons D J Victory, Administrator of Port Pirie (proxy, Archbishop Hickey)
Bishop Hitti, Bishop of Saint Maron of Sydney, Maronite Diocese

Apologies were received, for part of the meeting, from:

Bishop Robinson, Auxiliary for Sydney (proxy, Bishop Power)
Bishop Darwish, Eparchy of Sydney for Melkite Greek Catholics.

3 OPENING MASS

The Mass of the Holy Spirit was concelebrated in the chapel of the Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington, at 7 am on Friday 22 May 1998. The President of Conference, Cardinal Clancy, was the principal celebrant and preached the homily.

4 OPENING OF THE MEETING

The President welcomed the Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, Archbishop Franco Brambilla; the observers from the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes, Rev Kevin Dance cp, Brother Julian McDonald cfc and Sister Sonia Wagner sgs.

5 MESSAGE TO THE HOLY FATHER

The Conference sent the following message:

THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS, GATHERED IN CONFERENCE DURING THE WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY, IN AUSTRALIA, SEND CORDIAL GREETINGS TO THE HOLY FATHER.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE CELEBRATION OF THE OUT-POURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AT PENTECOST, ESPECIALLY DURING THIS YEAR OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN PREPARATION FOR THE GREAT JUBILEE.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO BEING WITH HIS HOLINESS IN NOVEMBER FOR THE SPECIAL SYNOD OF BISHOPS FOR OCEANIA AND FOR OUR VISITS AD LIMINA.

WE ASSURE HIS HOLINESS OF OUR AFFECTION, RESPECT AND GRATITUDE AS HE GENEROUSLY FULFILS HIS MINISTRY AS THE SUCCESSOR OF PETER, AND SEEK THE APOSTOLIC BLESSING ON OUR CONFERENCE AND OUR LOCAL CHURCHES.

His Eminence, Cardinal Sodano, Secretary of State replied:

THE HOLY FATHER IS GRATEFUL FOR THE MESSAGE OF GREETINGS WHICH YOU SENT ON BEHALF OF THE AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS CONFERENCE, AND HE DEEPLY APPRECIATES YOUR EXPRESSION OF AFFECTION AND COMMUNION WITH THE SUCCESSOR OF PETER IN “THE CARE OF ALL THE CHURCHES” (2 COR 11:28).

ON THE EVE OF THE SOLEMNITY OF PENTECOST, HIS HOLINESS JOINS YOU IN INVOKING THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO TURNED DARKNESS TO LIGHT IN THE CREATION AND DEATH TO LIFE AT EASTER. CONFIDENT THAT THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT “WORKING IN US CAN DO INFINITELY MORE THAN WE CAN EVER ASK OR IMAGINE” (EPH 3:20), HE PRAYS WITH YOU THAT THE COMING OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM WILL BRING A FRESH OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, TURNING ALL OUR “AFFLICTION AND ANGUISH OF HEART” (1COR 2:4) TO POWERFUL PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST AS ON THE DAY OF THE FIRST PENTECOST.

AWAITING THE GRACE WHICH WILL SURELY COME WITH THE SPECIAL ASSEMBLY FOR OCEANIA OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS AND ENTRUSTING THE ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD IN AUSTRALIA TO THE CARE OF MARY, HELP OF CHRISTIANS, THE HOLY FATHER CORDIALLY IMPARTS HIS APOSTOLIC BLESSING.

6 MESSAGE TO SICK AND RETIRED BISHOPS

Conference agreed to send greetings to:

- + J W Gleeson, Emeritus Archbishop of Adelaide
- + J Cullinane, Former Auxiliary, Melbourne
- + M McKeon, Emeritus Bishop of Bunbury
- + H Kennedy, Emeritus Bishop of Armidale
- + J Torpie, Emeritus Bishop of Cairns
- + J A Morgan, Former Military Vicar
- + A Khalife, Emeritus Bishop of St Maroun, Sydney
- + F Rush, Emeritus Archbishop of Brisbane
- + J Heaps, Former Auxiliary, Sydney
- + I Prasko, Emeritus Eparch of St Peter and Paul, Melbourne
- + D Warren, Emeritus Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes
- + J Jobst, Emeritus Bishop of Broome
- + L Clarke, Emeritus Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle
- + W Murray, Emeritus Bishop of Wollongong
- + E J Cuskelly, Former Auxiliary for Brisbane

- + T F Little, Emeritus Archbishop of Melbourne
- + P L Murphy, Emeritus Bishop of Broken Bay
- + R A Mulkearns, Emeritus Bishop of Ballarat
- + B V Heather, Emeritus Bishop of Parramatta

7 DECEASED BISHOPS

A tribute was paid to the late Francis Peter De Campo, Bishop of Port Pirie R.I.P. 23 April 1998 and to Bishop Eric Gerard Perkins, Former Auxiliary of Melbourne when news arrived of his death on 22 May 1998. The funeral was scheduled for 28 May 1998. R.I.P.

8 VISIT OF THE APOSTOLIC PRO-NUNCIO

His Excellency addressed the Plenary during its opening session.

9 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

MOTION That the Minutes of the November 1997
Plenary Meeting of the Australian
Catholic Bishops' Conference be
confirmed.

CARRIED

10

REDACTED
Relevance

11

12

REDACTED
Relevance



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Conference received the report, which was presented by Bishop Malone, Secretary.

112 TOWARDS HEALING (cf Plenary Nov 96 n.89 and Plenary April 97 n.93)

The Towards Healing program continues to be implemented by the Professional Standards Resource Groups operating in each State and Territory.

Overall, the Towards Healing process is proving itself to be effective. When the process is properly engaged, victims of sexual abuse indicate that they have been properly and justly treated by the Church in response to their complaint.

All Bishops and Religious Leaders are encouraged to follow closely the detailed process.

113 ENCOMPASS AUSTRALASIA

The national treatment program for clergy and religious with psycho-sexual issues needing to be addressed, has established itself as an effective and credible program.

A Board of Directors is now in place and a financial manager is in place. The financial position of Encompass Australasia is quite healthy. A financial statement will be forwarded later.

Both the Sydney and Melbourne offices have initiated workshops on sexual disorders and other related issues.

Anyone who needs treatment should be referred even if there is a problem with costs. Adjustments can be arranged.

114 INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY

The document INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY has been distributed to clergy and religious, as well as lay people who have expressed interest in the document, victims of abuse, lay organisations of the Church, and Catholic Education Offices. Over 15,000 copies of the document have been distributed.

The NCPS recently decided to extend the consultation period from the original closing date of 30 June to the new date of 31 December 1998.

Reaction to the document has been mixed. The document has drawn out a lot of the anger as well as morale concerns. Integrity in Ministry is primarily addressing clergy and religious with the issue of their accountability in ministry.

Discussion and dialogue amongst clergy should be encouraged, and facilitated by an outside facilitator. The National Committee can assist in recommending suitable facilitators, upon request.

115 CONSULTATION OF EPISCOPAL COMMITTEES ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE, DUNDRUM, IRELAND 18 - 21 MAY 1998

Bishop Robinson reported on a successful meeting. There was major input on pastoral care of a community; the multiple effects of abuse on innocent clerics who had worked in ministry with a perpetrator; and canonical issues.

The meeting in Ireland agreed that some canonical issues should be addressed in Rome as a matter of urgency.

MOTION That the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference requests the Holy Father to review, as a matter of great urgency, Canons 1717ff. concerning procedure, and Canon 1362 concerning prescription, in the light of the issues raised by accusations against priests and religious of sexual assault and in accordance with the principles of Canons 223§1 and 1341.

CARRIED

116 INFORMATION FOR CONFERENCE

The Committee gave Conference information on the following items:

National Committee for Professional Standards: The NCPS is still encouraging bishops and religious leaders to undertake CASE STUDIES OF THE MANNER IN WHICH COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE HAVE BEEN HANDLED AND THE RESPONSE TO COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED ABUSE.

Only 7 dioceses and 7 religious institutes have completed case studies.

Father David Cappelletti is happy to assist.

The document Transfer of Clergy and Religious: The document TRANSFER OF CLERGY AND RELIGIOUS has been sent to all bishops and religious leaders.

Physical Abuse working party: The PHYSICAL ABUSE working party is developing an appendix to Towards Healing, which will cover a range of physical abuse issues, including elder abuse.

False Allegations: A small working party has been established to look at the issue of FALSE ALLEGATIONS. The underlying issue for many clergy and religious is doubt and anxiety as to the level of support they would receive.

Convenors of Resource Groups: A successful meeting of CONVENORS OF RESOURCE GROUPS was held in Sydney on the 20 March. Bishop Robinson, Father Kevin Dance, CP and Father David Cappelletti met with the Convenors to discuss common concerns and issues.

Membership of Professional Standards Resource Groups (cf Plenary Nov 97 n.68): The membership of PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS RESOURCE GROUPS is a JOINT decision of the bishops and religious leaders of the particular province. Bishops are asked to act in conjunction with the religious leaders in the respective provinces in the appointment of Resources Group members.

Joint Project of the ACSWC and Centacare Sydney: The joint project of the ACSWC and Centacare Sydney regarding any particular aspects of the Church that may contribute to sexual abuse, is nearing completion. The National Committee will seek the approval of the ACBC and the ACLRI regarding the publication of the document.

The following pages have been
intentionally excluded:

2636-2675, 2679-2693 inclusive