



23 February 2023

To: The People of the Diocese, Clergy and Parish Leaders, All staff of the Diocese, its Agencies and Schools

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In late 2023 I wrote to advise you of the recent review and the forthcoming changes in two of our important Diocesan teams - Religious Education & Spirituality and Pastoral Ministries.

At the time, I also noted the opportunities for you, the people of our Diocese, to contribute and join me in sharing your views and exploring how we might best support our Diocese, our clergy, our parishes, and our people as well as those beyond on the margins and those who do not know Jesus Christ (Evangelii Gaudium (14), 2013).

Since my previous communication, our work has continued, and I am pleased to advise of our progress across the following key areas.

Implementation Committee

We have formed a suitable Implementation Committee to oversee our efforts, to manage implementation of the review recommendations and to ensure we hear from all those wanting to contribute.

I thank the following people, each of whom has agreed to participate and contribute to the dialogue as our approach to mission and evangelisation continues to be explored and defined:

- Fr Matthew Muller, Vicar General and Chair of the Committee
- Fr Greg Barker, Vicar General
- Mr Sean Scanlon, Chief Executive Officer
- Ms Shannon McGregor, Principal of St John's Primary School Lambton and parishioner of Holy Trinity, Blackbutt North
- Ms Emma South, Assistant Principal of St Bede's Catholic College Chisholm and parishioner of All Saints, Blackbutt South
- The committee will be supported by a Project Officer in the person of Ms Jenny Chung, Executive Director and Fund Manager of Catholic Community Fund

I am pleased to advise the Implementation Committee recently held its initial meeting and has agreed upon its Terms of Reference.

I would like to thank each of these members for their participation and contributions. Their expertise and experience will greatly benefit this work as we progress.

Listening to our people

Importantly, and building on the recommendations of the review, the Implementation Committee is committed to hearing from our people and sourcing feedback on the key areas and opportunities where further consultation is desired.

As I described in my earlier letter, our ministry work to-date has stretched far and wide and now we must focus our missionary efforts and path forward as a community of Christ's disciples.

To this effect, the Implementation Committee is liaising directly with our parish clergy and leaders throughout February and March. I encourage you to make your Parish Priest or Leader aware of any areas you would like raised.

We are also working with our schools and Diocesan staff to both hear from them directly and to ensure they encourage those in their communities and connected to the Diocese, to contribute as relevant.

Of course, we are also in fortnightly communication with the Religious Education & Spirituality team and the Diocesan Pastoral Ministries team. We recognise and value their work and look forward to their views and involvement as we progress.

More broadly and to enable as much participation as possible, we have developed five questions and encourage you to respond to these via the link on our Diocesan website [PM - RE&S Feedback Form](#). Your active participation will help to influence and shape the themes that emerge, focus our intent, and help us to navigate our path forward.

Your contributions will provide the foundation for our mission and evangelisation, from which the Implementation Committee will develop the plan that enables our Diocese to move forward.

Moving forward

It is with enthusiasm and vigour that I encourage you to join me as we explore our approach to mission and evangelisation. I look forward to this period of listening and discernment that will help to focus and shape our approach to supporting our parishes and schools in the mission of the Church.

The Implementation Committee will be providing a plan by the end of May and I look forward to continuing to share updates as suitable.

These are our first steps in examining how we bring people to encounter and build a relationship with Jesus Christ in the community of the Church, and I am hopeful that we walk this journey together and with Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Kennedy', with a cross symbol to the left.

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle