



Dear Friends in Mission,

Greetings from the Plenary Council Facilitation Team, we hope this finds you well and that 2019 is off to a great start.

I am writing to you after spending the day with His Eminence John Cardinal Dew in Wellington, New Zealand. He and his team have been kind enough to walk us through the process and resources for discernment they used in their Synod. It has been a very fruitful trip and we will benefit greatly from this learning in our own continued journey toward the Plenary Council in Australia.

At the end of this month, we will have five weeks left in this first stage of preparation which has been a wonderfully rich experience with over 40,000 people participating in Listening and Dialogue Encounters, and submitting a response to the question: 'What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?'

The qualitative analysis of the responses will be conducted by Dr Trudy Dantis and her team at the National Centre for Pastoral Research. Then after Easter in May, the Bishops Commission for the Plenary Council, the Executive Committee, and the Facilitation Team, will spend a few days of prayer and discussion with the input and guidance of the NCPD team to finalise the themes for the next stage of preparation: Listening and Discernment.

The Listening and Discernment stage will commence at Pentecost 2019 (June 9th) and continue until early 2020. The purpose of this stage is to listen deeply to what the Spirit is saying through the responses we have received on a particular theme, and to understand and connect with the sense of faith that has been shared by the people of God across Australia.

More information on this will be provided for you in coming months. For now, as an interim update and remembering there are 5 weeks left in this first stage of Listening and Dialogue, the NCPD have worked hard to prepare summary reports for each diocese. We hope this gives you some insight into the level of engagement for the local Church and the diversity of individual people and groups that are responding. This report is primarily quantitative and we hope this information is helpful for you. If you have any questions or would like to discuss anything in the report or about the preparatory process toward the Plenary Council generally, please do not hesitate to get in touch. We are at the service of the whole Church in Australia and we would be delighted to help you in any way.

Thank you sincerely for the work you are doing locally to lead and encourage the engagement of so many in the process of the Plenary Council. We ask you to keep us in your prayers as we do this work, and we look forward to continuing to work together as we listen to the Spirit and discern what God is asking of the Church in Australia.

Yours in Mission,

Lana Turvey-Collins

Plenary Council Facilitator | *On behalf of the Facilitation Team: Fr Noel Connolly and Peter Gates*

