

**Commissioning of Plenary Council Delegates**

**for a small gathering outside Eucharist**

**‘Listen to what the Spirit is Saying’**

**27th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**4 October 2020**

**Notes**

* **This Commissioning ritual is designed with COVID-19 in mind and in those places where it is not possible to gather in large numbers.**
* **The small group Commissioning ritual could be livestreamed for the wider worshipping community to take part remotely.**
* **It would be important to rehearse with all the delegates prior to the event so that they are familiar with their responses and when to move.**
* **Prepare a red candle for each delegate as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. You may wish to put the name of the delegate on their candle.**
* **Prepare a small table for the candles.**
* **Everyone is seated before the blessing begins.**

**Order of Service**

**Leader:** Good morning/evening and welcome. Due to COVID-19, the Plenary Council assembly dates for delegates have been moved to October 2021 in Adelaide and July 2022 in Sydney. ‘Listen to What the Spirit is Saying’ is the theme of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia and, with this invitation in our hearts, we will bless the delegates from our Diocese who will represent us at the Plenary assemblies.

Before the commissioning let us listen to a quote from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World from the Second Vatican Council. (Articles 1& 2)

**Reader:** We are united in Christ and we are bound together with each other carrying an essential word to all of humankind for its salvation. We in the Church are about the human situation for we are not without bodies and our bodies are created by God. Human history unfolds before us complete with triumph and tragedy. Only with God can it come to its intended goal: unity and love in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**[Pause for a short time of silence]**

**Leader:** There may be some thoughts or reflections around the Plenary Council journey that would like to share with the group.

**Commentator:** I now invite the delegates to please stand for the Blessing and Commissioning prayer.

**Leader:** [Names of delegates to be inserted] youhave been called to represent the faithful of the Diocese of [Diocesan name inserted] at the Plenary Council. May God grant you the grace to be open to the Spirit leading you through the days of prayer, listening and discernment during the process and gatherings of the Council.

**Delegates:**  May the Holy Spirit guide our hearts and minds.

**Leader:** Holy Spirit, empower these delegates with the grace to recognise the Word of God at work in the Church.

**Delegates:**  May the Holy Spirit come alive in our hearts and minds.

**Leader:** Holy Spirit, fill these delegates with the courage to be open to the future while respecting the tradition of the Church.

**Delegates:** May the Holy Spirit live in us as we travel this journey of faith with the Church of Australia.

**Candle Blessing**

**Leader:** Let us pray.

 May the light of Christ be your guide.

We bless these candles which serve as a sign of the Spirit at the centre of our journey, forever burning brightly, inviting us to look beyond the shadow of the now to a brighter future.

May the Holy Spirit guide us.

**All:**  **Amen.**

**The candles are now handed to the delegates.**

**Leader:** Take this candle, light it when you pray and sit in the loving presence of God during your times of discernment, giving thanks for the gifts of diversity and respect within our Catholic community.

Let us pray for all delegates of the Plenary Council and the Church of Australia.

**Leader:** Please stand

1. For the delegates of the Plenary Council in 2021 and into 2022,

that they will have the courage to listen with their hearts to the voice of the Spirit speaking through the people of Australia and the conviction to speak with love.

Lord we pray. [Pause for silence] **Response: Holy Spirit, guide us.**

1. For the Church in Australia:

As we continue to prepare for the Plenary Council in 2021 and into 2022, that we all continue to listen to the Spirit speaking through each other as we pray for the Word of God to shine in our world.

Lord we pray. [Pause for silence] **Response: Holy Spirit, guide us.**

**Leader:** Let us Pray.

**The following prayer could be put on the screen for all those who have zoomed into the Commissioning Ritual to pray**

 Through the power of the Holy Spirit we send you forth on behalf of the Diocese of [Diocesan name inserted]. Know that we are praying with you and for you. Know that what we are asking of you is part of everyone’s journey of discernment for a more hope-filled Church. Be confident that we are grateful for your willingness to represent our community at the Plenary Council.

## Leader: May God be present to you as the spirit of courage and right judgment, a spirit of knowledge and love as we support each other on our journey of faith.

**All:** May the Holy Spirit guide us all.

**Conclusion: Gentle reflective music played in the background as the Bishop congratulates the Delegates.**