



Friday, 18 December 2020

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I trust that you have been keeping well and coping with the many challenges that this year has brought to the lives of each of us. As we approach the celebration of Christmas, may we all draw renewed hope from Jesus' expectant coming among us.

As the first Assembly of the Plenary Council is now less than a year away, I wanted to take this opportunity to connect with each of you before the end of 2020 to share with you a number of developments in relation to the Plenary Council. I hope that in sharing these developments with you, you may be further assisted in your ongoing preparation as a delegate for this significant event in the life of the Australian Catholic Church.

Formation for Delegates:

The following dates have been designated in 2021 as delegate formation sessions.

Formation Session	Dates
Formation Session #1	Thursday, 17 June – Saturday, 19 June 2021
Formation Session #2	Thursday, 24 – Saturday, 26 June 2021
Formation Session #3	Thursday, 15 – Saturday, 17 July 2021
Formation Session #4	Thursday, 22 – Saturday, 24 July 2021

As you are aware, your online attendance at **one** of the above delegate formation sessions is required in order for you to be further prepared to contribute to the work of the first Assembly of the Plenary Council.

Please choose a first, second, and third preference for your attendance at **one** of these three-day sessions and email your preferences to the Facilitation Team at plenary.council@catholic.org.au by **Sunday, 31 January 2021**. You will receive an immediate reply to your email to confirm that it has been received by the Facilitation Team. Following this process, the Facilitation Team will send you the session dates you have been allocated by **Monday, 22 February, 2021**.

Statutes and Regulatory Norms:

At the recent meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in November 2020, the *Statutes and Regulatory Norms* for a Plenary Council were approved. I attach to this correspondence a copy of the *Statutes and Regulatory Norms* and encourage you to make





yourselves familiar with them. In the upcoming delegate formation sessions we shall walk through the document to ensure all delegates have a clear understanding of their role, and the guiding principles of the Plenary Council.

Resource Material:

Each delegate has previously been provided a reading with suggested materials to support the whole body of Delegates for the Plenary Council. I encourage you to make yourself familiar with as many of these resources as possible. I have included with this correspondence a paper I have written on the process of discernment.

If you have not done so recently, I encourage you to visit the [Plenary Council website \(www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au\)](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au) and review the monthly *Plenary Post*. This reconnection with the milestones which have occurred during 2020 will hopefully provide you with an opportunity to reconnect with the Plenary Council journey. I am mindful of how the impact of COVID-19 on our lives (and the need to postpone the Plenary Council Assemblies) invites us to find ways to re-focus our collective commitment to discerning the journey leading into the first Assemblies of the Plenary Council. Commencing in 2021 all Delegates will receive, by email, your own copy of the Plenary Post each month.

In these final days of our Advent, as we wait to celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us continue to pray for one another, our church community, and the many needs of our world.

I wish you, your family, and your local community blessings of peace and for joy for the forthcoming Christmas period and 2021.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Timothy Costelloe SDB

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